

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY OF ATHANASIUS

IN HIS CONFLICT WITH CONTEMPORARY HERESIES.

by

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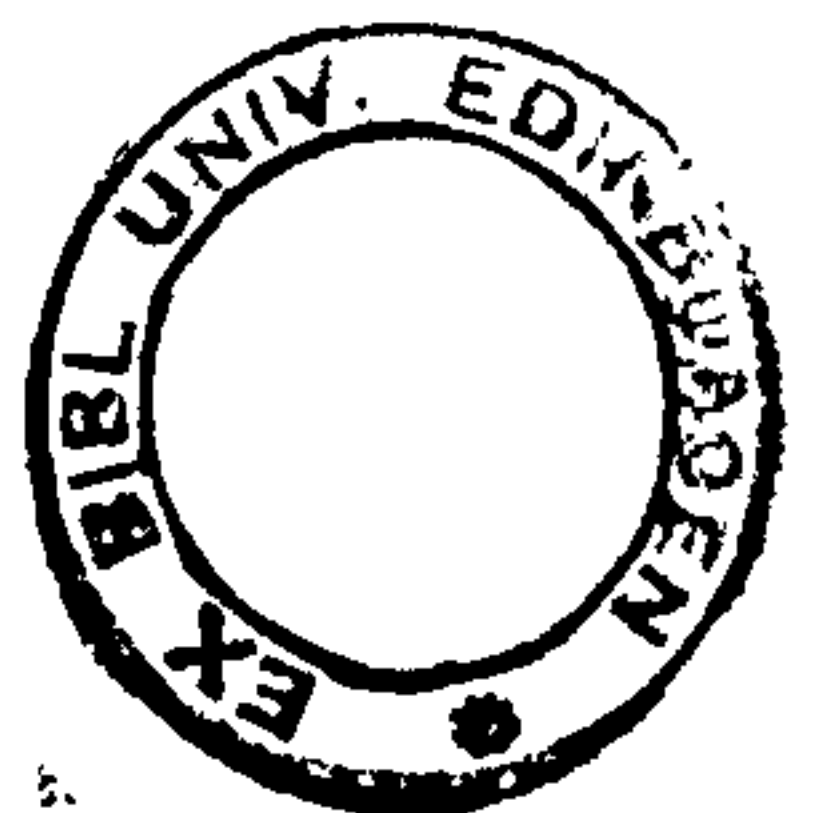
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# ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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Title of Thesis The Development of the Trinitarian Theology of Athanasius, in his  
Conflict with Contemporary Heresies.

The thesis was originally intended to be a study of the relationship between the doctrines of the Logos and Spirit in Athanasius, but even the most cursory analysis indicated that Athanasius lived through one of the most revolutionary epochs in the history of theology. Therefore, the question of the temporal development, if any, in his theology became supremely important. For that reason, the thesis had to be restricted to that field, any synoptic presentation of Athanasian theology being incidental. In form, the thesis is simply a commentary on the writings, in order, of Athanasius, ~~in order~~, as they occurred, with an occasional resume.

The "Contra Gentes" and "De Incarnatione" are examined first, since they are readily proved to be the first of Athanasius's writings, and date before the Arian controversy. The "Contra Gentes" is essentially apologetic, being based on what we would now term natural theology in its familiar modern form. The latter is far more Scriptural in its outlook. Compared with traditional interpretations of it, its theology is based far more on the Cross than is usually recognised, the Incarnation including, for Athanasius, the whole human life of Christ, culminating in the Cross and Resurrection. Any "incarnational" appearance in it is due to his tendency to describe things aetiologically. The principal aims of the Incarnation were, firstly, to pay the debt that man owed to God because of sin - a fully developed cultic-forensic side of the Atonement - and, secondly, to reveal, purely and simply, the Deity of the Logos through the Humanity as instrument. The recreation of a New Humanity in Christ, in the Image of God which has been lost, is present but relatively subordinate, and the Humanity of Christ is considered instrumentally. Although reference is made to our human participation in the benefits of Christ, this section of Athanasius's theology is by comparison crude and undeveloped, there being very little, if anything, about the Church, Ministry, or Sacraments. This indicates that, for Athanasius, the priority was to be given to Christ and Christ alone, and that much that is often assumed to be his "physicism" is simply for this reason.

Then, an investigation was made of the order in which the great anti-Arian writings were written, the conclusion being "De Sententia Dionysii" c.335; "In illud Omnia mihi tradita sunt", c.340; "De Decretis" 346-350. "Contra Arianos I-III" 350-356. "De Synodes" 359, followed soon by the Epistles to Serapion on the Holy Spirit. The next stage was a study of the Arian heresy, which yielded the remarkable conclusion that it was like nothing else in Church history, and that the only thing really like it is classical Marxism; in fact, in one respect Marxism is what Athanasius himself saw as the final and proper culmination of Arianism, and in another respect, Marxism is related to Arianism as the Third Person is related to the Second Person.

The remainder of the thesis was a study of the development of Athanasius's answer to this heresy, that the Second Person of the Trinity both as Son of the Father and as principle of governance of the universe, is a creature. It is traced through the whole anti-Arian corpus of Athanasius, culminating in the "Contra Arianos" I-III.

The great principles were that the Logos is to be correlated entirely with the Father, and that the passages of Scripture that spoke in a creaturely fashion of Christ were to be expounded in terms of his post-incarnate Humanity. As far as the basis of his theology is concerned, Athanasius is entirely scriptural, the only other major element being a type of ontological argument which shows that the Logos, etc. of God cannot be less than God. Authoritarianism and pragmatism are notably absent. The problem that remains is no more than the universal problem in all theology of the relation of Scripture to dogmatics, and a lot of it can be settled here in terms simply of the idea that the Scriptural testimony to Christ as God has absolute priority over that to Christ as a creature, and that the latter must be interpreted in terms of the former. While still on the prolegomena to theology, we may note the great

Use other side if necessary.



importance of the question of analogy for Athanasius, since Arianism gained much plausibility by misuse of analogy. Athanasius develops a completely systematic doctrine of analogy, that things can be predicated of God and man only analogically. Furthermore, he develops this doctrine further, that, e.g. fatherhood occurs properly only in the Deity, and that it is our fatherhood that always breaks down into what it is not. Finally, Athanasius concludes that analogy is not only formally correct but works materially too; e.g. not only is the unity we enjoy in Christ analogical to the unity that the Father and Son enjoy, but we could not enjoy it unless we were materially made to partake in the Divine unity, in a subordinate way.

The actual Trinitarian doctrine itself is still in the main Binitarian. There are two aspects, one, an almost physical side associated with the old Logos and Wisdom doctrine but interpreted supremely according to the Scriptural analogy of Light-source and Radiance, and the other a definite Son-theology in the stricter sense. In some ways, Athanasius has some difficulty in differentiating between Divine attributes and Persons of the Trinity, especially as regards the former type of theology. Athanasius offers a very interesting interpretation of the Nicene Homousion; the Ousia or Essence is what the chromosome constitution is in modern genetics. Later, there was a slight change but not, as is often supposed, from constitutive or arithmetic unity to generic unity; it is merely that the Homousion now stands for the ultimate difference between God and creatures.

Turning to the effect of all this on other doctrines, we find, first, a systematic exposition of the difference between God and the creatures, which can be summarised as an amazingly thorough and complete pluralism, as the truth of creaturely life as such and in distinction from God. The other new factor is a new doctrine of the Active Humanity of Christ, together with a well-developed exposition of the way in which we participate in this active and glorified humanity. This was necessitated by the exegesis of the Scriptural passages which described Christ glorified, but still a creature.

Parallel with all this, there are the first stirrings of the Doctrine of the Spirit. It arose after a long period of neglect because Athanasius had to account for men's participation in a Logos or Son that was now completely correlated with the Father and no longer immanent in men. But this had the dangerous result of placing the Spirit in an excessively human or creaturely context, and the apparent result, which happened immediately, was Tropicism, a sort of Arianism applied to the Spirit. In the "Letters to Serapion on the Holy Spirit", Athanasius substantially repeats his anti-Arian arguments in the new context, so completing his Trinitarian theology.

One particularly important point now emerges. The Doctrine of the Procession of the Spirit, from the Father alone or from Father and Son, far from being a mere theologoumenon, is one of the most important determinative factors in subsequent Church history. Athanasius, in spite of many Western interpreters, is definitely on the Greek side, procession from the Father only. The reason is the importance of the Light-source (or Sun) and Radiance analogy, which he extends to include Light (as it reaches others) as the Spirit. It would be very difficult to imagine such a Spirit proceeding in the same way from the Sun and from its radiance. The Latin Procession, from the Father and the Son, which is theologically correct, requires a more personalist Trinitarian doctrine.

Finally, the great Athanasian achievement is discussed, and attention is given to what ought to be the analogous refutation of Marxism. The answer is a real Christian doctrine of history, undertaken with a good and not a bad conscience, which historical development of Christian witness and Christian humanity would be related to the Third Person as the human Jesus is related to the Second, so that it does not compromise God's own glory. There are signs of this even in Athanasius, but in the main it has been a very neglected doctrine. It is the most urgent task for the Church to-day, in its theology.



## P R E F A C E

The author, coming as he does from a Church (1) where, unusually in modern times, the Doctrine of the Trinity has been a matter of the keenest debate within the whole of his short life so far, has always had a special interest in that doctrine. Also, since his philosophical training was based on metaphysical atheism of a pluralistic variety and involved great emphasis on the study of the Greek classical tradition, he was led once again to the Logos doctrine in its philosophical form which played such an important part in the second and third century theology. In view of the notorious and universally-recognised inverse correlation between this form of the Logos doctrine and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the author welcomed the suggestion of Professor T. F. Torrance that he study this question in the context of the theology of Athanasius. It had been the author's first intention to produce a normal type of study in the course of which various subdivisions of the subject would be treated in the light of quotations from the writings of Athanasius without overmuch regard for their chronological order of writing. At that stage, however, Professor Torrance once again pointed out that with a man like Athanasius the chronological development of his theology is supremely important, and a further examination of the material in this light completely altered the situation. It became evident, as it should be to anyone who does not accept the Roman Catholic theory of a constant corpus of doctrine, that the time of Athanasius was one of the most revolutionary in Church history, in every way. The

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(1) Presbyterian Church of Australia, State of New South Wales.



implications of this are most profound.<sup>(2)</sup> In the first place, every work of Athanasius should be studied separately, in principle; in particular, one must avoid reading his later theology into his earlier books, or interpreting and/or excusing any youthful aberrations by means of his mature judgement. Above all, perhaps, one must not interpret Athanasius in terms of his successors, even such<sup>a</sup> close a successor as St. Basil. The rate of change was simply too great. The effects of this on the critical issues are just as profound. It has become even more important than ever to understand exactly when, and in what order, the various writings of Athanasius were set down, as well as the question of their authenticity, just as these matters have become more difficult than before. In the first place, it becomes almost invariably inadmissible to allow the doctrinal content any place at all in determining these questions. In the second place, allowance must always be made for the way in which men's minds work, in such a period. Unfortunately, this is one thing with which the contemporary generation is all too familiar. The great German scholars of the latter half of the 19th century show quite clearly that they had no sense of this at all - how could they have had any? Roman Catholic scholarship in almost all epochs is in an even less satisfactory case. For this reason, it was virtually necessary to do all the critical work over again, and this applied in principle, regardless of any agreement or disagreement with former findings.

All this meant that the amount of work became prohibitive, so that formally the thesis had to be restricted to the chronological development of the theology of Athanasius. What

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(2) See below pp. 19-23



it ultimately became was a pure exegesis of the writings of Athanasius, in order. This may not appear to be systematic or scientific, but it had ~~many~~ a great advantage which may not meet the eye immediately; it meant that the author had to subject himself to the discipline of Athanasius's own thought and its own logic of development, and, what is even more important, to see various passages in their proper Athanasian context. One will have occasion to notice many instances in which false issues have arisen through neglect of this principle, and where its following through has thrown light on many things that were otherwise obscure.(3) The traditional method without the one that has been followed here is always dangerous and all too often sterile, since it is the perfect way to impose one's own preconceived pattern on the raw material and to miss much that the author really intends. These dangers are trebly serious in the case of Western theologians studying Athanasius, who has not really been a traditional source of Western theology. The tradition of Athanasius as the supreme defender of Nicaea and his long pseudepigraphic association with the "Athanasian Creed", the traditional touchstone of orthodox Trinitarianism, has made the matter even more serious. There is no worse way of understanding a great thinker of any sort - and apparently in spite of the nature of theology this applies most of all here - than to regard him as the essential and supreme representative of orthodoxy. This means simply that one finds what one expects and misses the whole point of what he is saying.

The second limitation, or group of limitations, concern-

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(3) In particular, the dispute about the meaning of the Homousian in the later works of Athanasius would not have arisen in its familiar form if more attention had been paid to the context of Athanasius's reference to this principle.



ed the amount of material. It was necessary to concentrate on the more strictly Trinitarian, and, to a less extent, Christological, issues, and to neglect the soteriology, except insofar as it involved itself intimately with the above two topics -- which was a great deal. The author was prepared to face the charge of arid intellectualism, since he was dealing with the more neglected half, anyway as far as Protestant theological study and tradition are concerned. For the same reason, it was necessary to make a rough chronological break at about the year 362, which represents in general the great divide in Athanasius and in theological history generally between the period of the Arian controversy and the period during which Christology in the narrower sense was the main centre of interest; the issues of Chalcedonian orthodoxy, and the Nestorian, Eutychian and Apollinarian heresies; incidentally, as will be shown in the thesis, it will be in the interests of theological clarity to keep these periods distinct.<sup>(4)</sup> For the same reasons, the author found himself unable to pay any great attention to dubious works, like the "De Incarnatione et Contra Arianos" and the "Oratio IV Contra Arianos", or even to such works as the "Quicumque dixerit" to which a date cannot be assigned; the amount of critical work would have been prohibitive. Even with these restrictions, it was impossible to avoid a great accumulation of material, but in spite of all efforts it proved to be even less possible to achieve any further condensation. The reason for this is the quality in Athanasius that is so often mistaken for sheer verbosity. Athanasius is not verbose; in fact, it proved quite difficult to cut him or even to paraphrase him, and for all his length of writing he shows in full measure the

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(4) See below p. 72, 438-9.



wonderful economy and efficiency of language characteristic of all the best Greek writing, notably Plato. A summary of Athanasius is likely to prove as long as, and far less lucid than, the original. No; Athanasius is prolix and repetitious for the same reason that Hegel the philosopher, Barth the theologian and Wagner the music-dramatist are prolix; in all four cases it is because they have such an overwhelming sense of the unity of their subject that whenever part of it comes up, they are inexorably committed to expounding the whole every time, in relation to the part. Whatever we may think of Hegel and Wagner, this principle is the true basis of theology. There is One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism,<sup>(5)</sup> and if theology is to be really Christian, it must in some way partake of the absolute unity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever one may think of this, it was patently the method which Athanasius instinctively followed, and failure to respect this procedure will mean the mutilation of Athanasian theology. This of course is the complete opposite to the principle of specialisation in such favour today, which may be the reason for the neglect of so much of the subject matter of this thesis, with the result that even some important individual questions are not widely known. For instance, is it really appreciated that Athanasius is one of the most important theologians on analogy, and that in many respects he went further than anybody else?<sup>(6)</sup> That Athanasius gave a clearer account of the whole complex of issues involved in the contemporary dispute concerning the analogia entis than any other theologian, even its principal<sup>2</sup> protagonists, Karl Barth and Erich Przywara?<sup>(7)</sup> Or that Athanasius had a great deal

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(5) Eph. IV. 5.

(6) See C. Ar. I. 22, which makes it clear why the problem was so acute and see below p.

(7) See C. Ar. III. 16-25, and see below p. 760-780.



to say on metaphysical matters like monism, pluralism, relativism, etc., as theological issues?(8) The author would not have noticed these had he not followed through the whole text of the writings of Athanasius; the number of times that he thought that a passage could be dismissed easily and then found that it contained a most important issue that was unsuspected by himself and even by the whole tradition of theology, was incredible. The normal method, allowing for easy subdivision if necessary, would have been simpler in the long run, but, like Martin Luther, the author could do none other.

Following this method, the author gradually became convinced of two things which, even at this very late stage, radically altered his whole estimate of Athanasius; once again, he had no choice but to recognise and follow this change. First, the part played by sheer truth in Athanasius. In this regard, he was simply following Greek tradition, both secular and theological, at its best; did not his fellow-Hellenistic Alexandrian Clement, a century and a half before, say that he would honestly prefer not to believe in salvation if it were not true?(9) It is this quality in Athanasius that is often mistaken for arid intellectualism, especially in the "Contra Arianos". Far too often, Western theologians, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, try to make Athanasius out, in a very Western way, to be either a theological disciplinarian or a theological pragmatist; that is, that he taught Trinitarian orthodoxy either because Church tradition or other authority prescribed it, or because it was the condition of our deification

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(8) See C. Ar. II. 18-72, and see below pp. 818-904.

(9) See



which, pragmatically, must be maintained. This tendency, it would not be too much to say, is universal in Western scholarship. Protestant theology and scholarship has become infected with the pragmatism and - to be perfectly and brutally frank - what often amounts to the misology (even in the Trinitarian sense!) of the school of Ritschl and Harnack. Roman Catholic theologians, on the other hand, tend to be disciplinarians, but they do not appear to have recovered from the discovery, first, that Athanasius did not write the "Athanasian Creed", and second, that the technical terminology of later Trinitarian and Christological orthodoxy is largely missing in Athanasius; therefore, pragmatism is for them the obvious solution to the problem.(10) The whole experience of the author has shown him that both principles, while undoubtedly present in Athanasius, are false, in the sense in which they are commonly assumed to be the basis of his whole theology. Athanasius fought and suffered for the doctrines of the Deity of Christ and the Spirit simply because he was overwhelmingly convinced that they were, in the most simple and direct sense as well as the more profoundly theological sense, true.

The other thing that the author noticed, to his great interest, was that the crisis which the Christian faith faced in the Arian heresy was essentially the same as that which it is now facing in Marxism,(11) in spite of the apparent theism of Arianism which has masked the basic<sup>c</sup> resemblance, and which incidentally Athanasius did not regard as at all significant beside its monstrous errors on the Second Person. Once this

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(10) See below pp. 524-529.

(11) See below pp. 443-488.



had been noticed, each heresy brought into sharp focus much about the other that is usually obscure, and as time went on, the evidence progressively accumulated. Here again one could see this only through following the Arian heresy out as it appeared in Athanasius and Athanasius alone, since after all he was by far its greatest theological antagonist as well as the man who, par excellence, was committed to this struggle. The author particularly remembers the intense surprise with which he read again the "Essence of Christianity" by Feuerbach, the great and recognised predecessor of Marx, from whom the latter derived his fundamental atheism; even at the very late stage when the whole hypothesis had been worked out, the author was not prepared to find, as he did, that the book fitted the whole Christological section of the "Contra Arianos" (III:26-58) like a glove, since, save only that its reference was general while the Arians spoke of the individual Second Person, it exactly duplicated the Arian reasoning which was being attacked in that part of the Orations! The author, like a good scientist, must take what is coming to him if this hypothesis is, with reason, held to be no more than auto-suggestion, but at the moment he is firmly convinced that this is the true measure of what the Church has missed by reason of the basically false methods of Athanasian study so far, and that, after the basic requirements of all Christian theology, the first thing that a theologian must do in order to give a theological answer to Marx is to study the "Contra Arianos" of Athanasius.

One final word in explanation; the staple theological diet of the author has been Karl Barth, and he found no point in trying to conceal this in the thesis. The primary reason is



that he intended and hoped to write from within the Reformed tradition; incidentally, there is, from its own point of view, an urgent need for a genuine Reformed school of Patristic studies. But even apart from this, the choice of Barth is peculiarly appropriate. In the first place, there is the sheer thoroughness and comprehensiveness of Barth, and in particular, he is always most careful to explain not only why he believes a certain thing, but also why he rejects the alternatives. In this connection, the large number of historical and exegetical excursus are most useful. But the really important thing, for the purposes of Athanasian study is that, if the Marxist hypothesis of the author is correct, Barth and Athanasius are similarly situated with regard to what are fundamentally analogous crises, even if, as the author believes, Barth suffers through not quite appreciating Marx himself.<sup>(12)</sup> Therefore, the resemblances and differences between the two great theologians are of the greatest interest. We have already commented on what they have in common methodologically, and what is even more significant is that the well known Christocentricity of Barth has its exact equivalent in Athanasius. In each case, the author believes that these theologians are not only right in terms of the necessities of the historical situation, but right in the absolute sense, and that the Arian and Communist crises are, theologically considered, judgments on the Church to bring it back to the truth.

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The text followed has normally been that of Migne,

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(12) See below pp. 447 f.



except where Opitz is available, and in any case citation is by the pagination and columnation of Migne, which Opitz has incorporated into his text. This has been done even when the citation has been in English. Unfortunately, the latter does not appear to extend to perhaps the three most important works, "De Incarnatione", "Contra Arianos" and "Epistolae ad Serapionem de Spiritu Sancto". There are very few differences between the two texts and hardly any of these, if any at all, make important alterations to the sense. For typographic reasons, the large citations necessary to establish things in their context, which is so important for the author's purpose, are in English, with the Greek, where necessary, in footnotes or in brackets. A few recurrent Greek formulae, which have already been explained, are after a certain stage left untranslated as their meaning would by then be obvious. It is fortunate that all the important and undoubted works of Athanasius are in English, and that in general the Greek of Athanasius is of such a character as to go readily into English without even much modification or paraphrase. The translation has normally been that of Newman and Robertson in the Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, in general very satisfactory, except where the author himself has modified it in the following cases; where he has diverged from the Benedictine (Migne) Text, where the translation is out of date or not sharp enough or is unduly influenced by the Latin, or where it is necessary to adhere more closely to the syntax of the Greek. In the case of the Letters to Serapion on the Holy Spirit, which Newman and Robertson did not translate, the translation followed has been that of Shapland, whose critical notes on the Greek text have been largely accepted. The historical and theological notes of Newman and Shapland were of inestim-



able value and constituted in each case the principle secondary authority.(13) Other Patristic writings have, where necessary, been cited according to Migne, or, in translation, the Ante-Nicene Christian Library or the Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, except where indicated otherwise.

Plato has been cited according to the classical pagination of Stephanus, which is normally in the margin of all editions and translations. The great modern classics of theology, philosophy and psychology, including Marx and Freud, have normally been referred to in translation, and in some cases, for example Freud, no citation in the usual sense is necessary, since the reference is really to what is universally agreed to be his basic principle which is exemplified in his works, *passim*.

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The final form of the thesis has been, with some interpolations, a critical exegesis of Athanasius's writings, together with a summary at the end of each book, with a final chapter on the significance, in general, of Athanasius, especially for to-day. Since the centre of interest is the Doctrine of the Trinity, the form of these summaries has been standardised as follows; 1. How do we know that the Logos and/or Spirit is God? 2. What is the positive Trinitarian doctrine expounded? 3. What is the effect of this on other issues, in the first place

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(13) The author found that the great disadvantage with Newman, from his point of view, was that, in regarding Athanasius as the supreme representative of orthodoxy, he tends to compare Athanasius with his successors, rather than with his predecessors, which would have been more interesting for the author. Unfortunately, to give a full account of Athanasius in terms of all previous theology would have meant another prohibitive addition to the work required.

Christology, and then soteriology and lastly, perhaps, any other doctrine? This scheme should give a full picture of Athanasian teaching at the various stages, and in addition convey very much better than usual the historical dynamic of Athanasius.



## I N T R O D U C T I O N

### C H R O N O L O G I C A L   T A B L E

Before we start on the detailed study of the writings of Athanasius, we first of all must give a brief chronology of the period, for a reason which will become clear in the subsequent discussion. In a theological study like this, there is no need to go into a lot of critical detail on these questions, many of which are in their own way difficult and contentious, as in fact the most important thing is the general character of the period as is revealed by the chronology.

A.D. 250-260      Persecution of Decius and Valerian.

Suffering and death (254) of Origen.

Martyrdom of Cyprian (258).      Gregory

Thaumaturgus floruit.

260f.

Spread of Sabellianism.      Correspondence between Dionysius of Alexandria and Dionysius of Rome on the charge that the latter, in combatting Sabellianism, had slipped into a heresy like the later Arianism.      Plotinus the Neo-Platonist floruit.

c. 269

Synod of Antioch deposes their bishop, Paul of Samosata, on the charge that he regarded Christ as personally or hypostatically purely man, in whom the wisdom of God, personally or hypostatically indistinguishable from the Father, dwelt impersonally. In their judgement, the Synod condemn the term *ὁμοούσιος* as

applied to the Second Person in relation to the First.(1)

270-300 One of the most obscure and quiet periods of early Church history. No important persecutions. The prevailing theology in the East has been generally described as a degenerate Origenism which emphasised the distinction between the Persons of the Trinity; it was this party that condemned Paul of Samosata. Lucian of Antioch (2) fl.. Methodius, who opposed Origen in many ways, fl.. Porphyry, the successor of Plotinus, fl.. He replaced the early mysticism of Neo-Platonism by a revival of classical antiquity at its worst.

295(3) ATHANASIUS BORN AT ALEXANDRIA.

301(or 306) Meletian schism commences at Alexandria.

Feb. 303 Commencement of the persecution of Diocletian and his successors.

311 Edict of Galerius, granting partial toleration, but persecution continued in the East, including Egypt, under Maximin Daza. Martyrdom of Peter Bishop of Alexandria,

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- (1) For further discussion of the critical questions on this matter, see below pp. 361-66.  
 (2) For the critical questions concerning Lucian of Antioch, see below pp. 331-361  
 (3) According to a Coptic encomium, Athanasius became Bishop in 328 at the age of 33. Cf. Kruger, "Jahrbuch für protestantische Theologie" XVI:339-344. The Eusebians first complained in 340 that Athanasius was below the canonical age of 30 at his appointment.



succeeded by Achilles, who died a few months later.

312(Jan. 47) Martyrdom of Lucian of Antioch.

312 Commencement of Donatist schism in Carthage. Alexander bishop of Alexandria. Battle of the Milvian Bridge, the famous decisive victory of Constantine.

313 Edict of Milan. Maximin Daza defeated at Adrianople by Licinius.

314 Council of Arles.

314ff Constantine follows pro-Christian policy, while minor sporadic persecution continues in the East under Licinius. Eusebius of Caesarea fl.. Lactantius fl.. Iamblichus the Neo-Platonist fl.. Rise of Monasticism and asceticism as a continuing phenomenon, principally in Egypt and Syria. Antony fl..

318(4) Commencement of Arian dispute at Alexandria. Alexander and Arius define their positions in a heated exchange.  
(or 319)  
(or 320)  
(or 323)f

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(4) The question of the chronology of the Meletian schism and the Arian heresy are linked in the following important passage from the "Ep. Encycl. ad Episcopos Aeg. et Lib." 22: PG XXV 589B: "The former (sc. Meletians) became schismatics 55 years ago, and it is 36 years since the latter (the Arians) were pronounced heretics (ἀπεδείχθησαν ἀίρετικοί), and they were rejected from the Church by the judgement of the whole Ecumenical Council". Since (ch.7:553C-556A) the Letter was written when George was Arian Bishop designate of Alexandria but had not yet arrived, and (5:548C-549A) the great persecution of the Third Exile, at its height in 359 (see "Hist. Arianorum", passim) was only just beginning, we can place this Letter before, or not long



321 Arius deposed by synod at Alexandria,  
and leaves to take shelter with  
Eusebius of Nicomedia.

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- (4) after, Feb. 24, 357, the date of the arrival of George. On this basis, the Meletian schism would have started in 301, and the condemnation (*ἀποδείξις*) that took place 36 years before would have been the preliminary condemnation by Alexander of Alexandria, which would have been in c. 320. However, if the condemnation is referred, following the next phrase, to the Council of Nicaea, this would bring the Meletian schism forward to 306, and the date of writing of the "Ep. Encycl." to 361, and would be consistent with the later dating of the origin of the Arian controversy. Already Baronius (see Montfaucon's "Monitum" to the "Ep. Encycl.") was prepared to do this, although it makes nonsense of the historical contents of the Epistle, and he is followed by Eduard Schwartz, "Gesammelte Schriften" Bd.III:167 = "Nachrichten Göttingen" 298-99; and Bardy, "St. Athanase" 296-373, is also prepared to accept the late origin of Arianism, following Schwartz. Schwartz's arguments are that Eusebius of Caesarea (Vita Const. Book II) emphasised the rapidity of the onset of the heresy, and that the history of the heresy makes no mention of the persecution of Licinius in 323 (ib. "G.S." III:156-168 = "N.G." 290-299). He also suggests that the thing that precipitated the intervention of Constantine was the involvement of the Colluthian schism in Egypt, who were ultra-orthodox and hostile to the Emperor; also that the Lucianists in Syria were friendly with Helena, the mother of Constantine, who was therefore against the Eustathian party in Antioch, and that the Lucianists again-Schwartz accepts the Lucianic hypothesis in the main - were friendly with the Egyptian cultural element based on the former Catechetical School, which was still strong not only among the Egyptian laity but also the presbyterate, and against which the Episcopate of Alexandria, which had by now turned anti-Origenist, had long been conducting a running fight. This last concept, though interesting and perhaps important, libels what the author is convinced is the great intellectual power, in the academic sense, of Athanasius (see "G.S." III:176-187 = "N.G." 1908:354-9 and 365-74, esp. "G.S." 176-180). To return to the main point, the author is not convinced that these arguments override the authority of the "Ep. Encycl.", and that the earlier dating is accepted. Möhler, "Ath. der Grosse .." 173 (2nd. ed.), accepts the suddenness of the outbreak of the Arian controversy without committing himself as to the date, and combines this with the opening lines of Arius's "Thalia", taken circumstantially and not as a general boast, to prove the Lucianic hypothesis. Most other authorities, including Opitz, accept that the Arian controversy started in 318. The point about the evidence of Eusebius is that Constantine's defeat of Licinius occupies chapters 17-51 of the book, immediately followed by the



321ff. Arian dispute spreads throughout entire East. Eusebius of Caesarea and majority of Eastern Bishops plead with Alexander for tolerance.

323 Final persecution under Licinius in East, his defeat, Constantine sole Emperor;

(324) summons General Council for the

sake of unity within the Church.

*Dec 324*  
Jan 325 (5) *Death of Philogonius, anti-Arian bishop of Antioch*  
Synod of Antioch suspends (inter alios)

Eusebius of Caesarea on suspicion of Arianism.

~~Dec. 324 Death of Philogonius, anti-Arian.~~

325 June 19th ff. Council of Nicaea. Gives ruling against the quartodecimans, attempts to settle Meletian and Novatian schisms. Owing to the blatancy of the Arian party and the superior tact of their opponents, Arius is left with almost no support and is expelled and his literature proscribed.

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(4) first mention of Arianism. As against this, it can be fairly replied that all that this means is that this was the first time that, theologically, this rejoinder is probably well taken. (4a)

(5) For the question of the Council of Antioch, in early 325, before the Council of Nicaea, see Erich Seeberg, "Die Synode von Antiochen..", 1913; Eduard Schwartz, "G.S." III:117-156; "N.G." 1905:257-290; J. N. D. Kelly, "Early Christian Creeds", 208-226, esp. 208-211. It was apparently what later became the Eustathian party in Antioch that took action against the ?-Arian (?-Neo-Origenist, ?-Lucianic) opposition, and it is by no means unlikely that the old faction fight in this region was exacerbated by the onset of Arianism. The precipitating cause was the death of the orthodox or, to use an oxymoron, Eustathian, Bishop Philogonius, on Dec. 20th, 324; he was succeeded by Eustathius, the celebrated and definitive representative of the same party.

(4a) insert: Constantine felt the importance of Arianism, and as he is generally agreed to have had no grasp of it,...

The-middle- of-the-road conservatives and the Emperor support the Alexandrian party, in the former case not without heart-searchings. The Council hammers out a new Creed, to be accepted by the whole Church, and to replace local creeds, in which the Deity of Christ is maintained by the introduction of many Christological phrases, and Arianism, in the shape of its characteristic expressions, anathematized. In particular, *ὁμοούσιος τῷ Πατρὶ* was reinstated as a description of Christ. The only bishops who refused to sign were Theonas of Marmarica and Secundus of Ptolemais, both Egyptians, but Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognis of Nicaea and Maris of Chalcedon appear to have signed under protest. The text of the agreed Creed was as follows: (from Kelly: "Early Christian Creeds." - p. 215-16)

We believe in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ the Son of God, begotten from the Father, Only-begotten, that is, from the substance of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, True God from True God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through Whom all things came into being, things in heaven and things on earth, Who because of us men and because of our salvation came down and became incarnate, becoming man, suffered and rose again on the third day, ascended to the heavens, and will come to judge the living and the dead.

And in the Holy Spirit.

But as for those who say, There was once when He was not, and, Before being born He was not, and, that He came into existence out of nothing, or who assert that the Son of God is of different hypostasis or substance, or is created, or is subject to alteration or change - these the Catholic Church anathematizes.



(?)

Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἓνα Θεόν, πατέρα παντοκράτορα, πάντων ὁρατῶν τε καὶ ἀοράτων ποιητὴν.

Καὶ εἰς ἓνα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, γεννηθέντα ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς μονογενῆ, τούτεστιν ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς, Θεὸν ἐκ Θεοῦ, φῶς ἐκ φωτός, Θεὸν ἀληθινὸν ἐκ Θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ, γεννηθέντα οὐ ποιηθέντα, ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρί, δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο, τὰ τε ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ τὰ ἐν τῇ γῇ, τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καὶ διὰ τὴν ~~ἐκείνην~~ ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν κατελθόντα καὶ σαρκωθέντα ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ, παθόντα καὶ ἀναστάντα τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ, ἀνελθόντα εἰς οὐρανούς, καὶ ἐρχόμενον κρῖναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς.

Καὶ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα.

Τοὺς δὲ λέγοντας· ἦν ποτε, ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, καὶ, πρὶν γεννηθῆναι οὐκ ἦν, καὶ ὅτι ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐγένετο, ἢ ἐξ ἑτέρας ὑποστάσεως ἢ οὐσίας φασκόντας εἶναι, ἢ κτιστὸν ἢ τρεπτὸν ἢ ἀλλοιῶτον τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀναθεματίζει ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία.

325ff. Triumph of Nicene party apparently complete, but the anti-Nicene reaction silently incubates, especially among conservatives and in Court circles.

June 8th 328 ATHANASIUS BECOMES BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA.

330 (6) The first step of the anti-Nicene reaction: deposition and exile of Eustathius, Bishop of Antioch, by the local Synod on the grounds of Sabellianism. Eustathius and his orthodox successors continue as schismatic church for decades.

331-2 Complaints to Constantine by opponents of Athanasius, including the Meletians

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(6) There are many historical difficulties about this period, which are still, and probably always will be, extremely controversial concerning the question of the extent to which the opposition to Athanasius in this period was actually Arian. The whole question will be further discussed, pp 359-60. The author believes that the earlier stages were bedevilled by the conflict over Eustathius and Marcellus of Ancyra, which involved not only a long-standing feud in the patriarchate of Antioch, but also, quite probably, a nationalistic revival of the East against Rome, for long associated with the Sabellian heresy in its various ramifications. However, there was always a genuine Arian party, whose nature and policy, at that time, was to disguise itself under various innocent movements.

of his arrogance, unjust fiscal exactions, and suspect political activities; and that his election in 328 was invalid on the ground that he was under the canonical age of 30 years at the time, that he had instigated a violent and sacrilegious attack on the dissident priest Ischyras in which his chalice was broken, and that he had murdered the Meletian Bishop Arsenius and procured his hand for purposes of magic. Constantine, under the influence of Eusebius of Nicomedia and the Court party, presses for the readmission of Arius, without success, but takes no action yet.

335 The Arian party, now much stronger, summon Athanasius to Council of Tyre on the above charges, and send a commission of their supporters to Mareotis to investigate. Athanasius escapes and appeals to Constantine at Constantinople. Constantine hesitates at first, but on receipt of a fresh charge that he was cornering the Egyptian wheat harvest, banishes him to Treveri. Arrangements made for Arius to be formally readmitted at the dedication of the church on Mount Calvary on the occasion of Constantine's Tricennalia, but he dies suddenly the day before. Eusebius of Caesarea and Asterius the Sophist denounce Marcellus, Bishop of Ancyra, Athanasius's friend and ally, on



a proved charge of Sabellianism, which revives the old suspicion of the Homousian. About this time, Eusebius of Nicomedia becomes Bishop of Constantinople.

336 Marcellus of Ancyra deposed by Synod of Constantinople, succeeded by Basil.

22nd May 337 Death of Constantine; death-bed baptism by Arians. Empire shared by his three sons as Augusti; Constantine II (Gaul, Carthage and westward), Constans (Italy and Illyricum), Constantius (the East). The former two sympathetic to Athanasius, as are the Bishops of the West; the last although much less sympathetic and in close proximity to Eusebius late of Nicomedia, consents to a restoration of the deposed and banished bishops. Athanasius returns to Alexandria in November by Imperial permission.

338 Arian party successfully pleads with Constantius for reversal of the restoration of the Nicene bishops. Both sides make representations to Julius, Bishop of Rome. Anti-Nicenes assemble at Antioch, declare See of Alexandria vacant, and call for nominations. Constantius replaces the pro-Athanasian Prefect at Alexandria by an anti-Nicene.

339 (Lent) Athanasius forcibly ejected and replaced by Gregory. Scenes of outrage and violence.

Athanasius flees to Rome, where he meets  
Marcellus of Ancyra, also exiled.

Eusebius of Caesarea dies.

- 340 Constans defeats Constantine II and controls two thirds of the Empire. Athanasius in Rome, and supported by the Western bishops. Rival Synods in Rome and Antioch.
- 341 Council of the Dedication at Antioch, attended by the anti-Athanasian Eastern churchmen. Rejecting for this purpose the old Lucianic creed, the council makes four attempts to draw up a satisfactory creed, without final agreement. The conservatives and moderates wish to exclude both the extremes of Arianism and Sabellianism, but particularly the latter; The Arians wish to water down the anti-Arian elements so as to allow them a loophole, which in fact was the result.
- 342 Eusebius of Nicomedia dies. The last heard of Asterius the Sophist.
- 343 Both emperors together arrange a new Council at Sardica (modern Sofia), just inside Constans's portion. The anti-Athanasian bishops come in a body and at Philippopolis issue the Macrosthich, with its many anathemas directed almost entirely against Sabellianism in general and Marcellus of Ancyra in particular. The council disperses, the Eastern (anti-Athanasian)



and Western (Athanasian) groups each issuing their manifestos, the latter supporting both Athanasius and Marcellus.

345 Reaction in favour of Athanasius in the East, after the Arians overreached themselves. (See Athanasius, "Hist. Ar." XX). Gregory dies.

~~345, 346~~ or ~~347~~ (7)  
345 or 347 (1)

Athanasius and other exiled persons return. First Council of Sirmium. Photinus, extreme disciple of Marcellus of Ancyra, deposed and repudiated in the West.

350 Murder of Constans.

351-5 New anti-Athanasian reaction incubates.

Anti-Nicene party becomes divided into an extreme wing, the Anomoeans, and the moderate Homoeans. Catechetical Lectures of Cyril of Jerusalem. Hilary of Poitiers fl.

351-2 Second Council of Sirmium, during which the anti-Nicenes issue the "Fourth Creed of Antioch" with modifications.

353 Inconclusive Council of Arles.

355 Council of Milan repeats condemnation of Athanasius. Unsuccessful effort to depose him by force. Anomoean party definitely crystallises, led by Actius and later Eunomius in the East, and apparently by

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(7) 347 is the usual date. Gericke, "Marcell von Ancyra", accepts 345. Sirmium is Sr. Mitrovica in Serbia. (Yugoslavia).

Valens in the West. The leading Homo-  
eans were Acacius and Eudoxius in the East  
and Ursacius in the West. It is note-  
worthy that at this stage there is a strong  
Arian party in the West, indicating that  
orthodoxy had no special Western associations.

Feb. 8th 356 Attempted arrest of Athanasius at the Church  
of St. Theonas; amid scenes of violence,  
Athanasius escapes and goes into hiding,  
first in Alexandria for two or three years,  
and afterwards in the Egyptian desert.

George of Cappadocia, an Arian, forcibly  
installed as bishop.

357 Conference of Western Arian bishops at  
Sirmium. An openly Anomoean creed issued,  
known as the "Blasphemy of Sirmium".

358 Conservative "semi-Arian" party alienated  
by the rise of extreme Anomoeanism. Synod  
of Conservative Eastern bishops at Ancyra  
issues a statement against both Sabellianism  
and Anomoeanism. Leading members of this  
party were Basil of Ancyra, Eustathius of  
Sebaste, Macedonius of Constantinople,  
Eusebius of Emesa, Cyril of Jerusalem.  
They secure temporary suspension of  
Anomoean leaders.

359 Under Imperial direction, a new General  
Council called, in two divisions, the  
Western at Rimini, the Eastern at Seleucia  
in Cilicia. Basil of Ancyra, Valens and



others in each party, hold preliminary conference in Sirmium to synchronise and harmonise the two conferences, and issue "Dated Creed" (Pentecost Eve, 22nd May), which bans  $\text{οὐσία}$  and all its derivatives, substituting  $\text{ὁμοιος κατὰ πάντα}$ . Each council repudiates Anomoeanism, Rimini for the Nicene Creed, Seleucia for the Creed of the Dedication, but as there was technically a disagreement (October), managers proceed to continue negotiations in presence of Constantius, who forces them to accept the Anomoean position, both divisions later following suit (Dec. 31st.).

- 360 Council of Constantinople issues new Arian creed. The Anomoeans make a few concessions, including their leader, Aëtius, but depose the entire semi-Arian party. Macedonius replaced by Eudoxius at Constantinople; and is replaced at Antioch by Meletius, who himself turns out to be not sufficiently Arian and is later replaced by Euzoius.
- 361 Julian, having lead a rebellion in Gaul the previous year, becomes undisputed Emperor on death of Constantius in November. George of Alexandria lynched, Christmas Eve.
- 362 Julian openly professes heathenism, withdraws all Imperial support for Christianity (in practice, for its Arian side), and in token of his disinterest, restores all exiled

Nicene bishops (Feb. 9th). Athanasius returns to Alexandria (Feb. 21st).

Julian attempts a revival of classical Graeco-Roman literature, culture, ways of thought and religion; in this he is under the influence of Neo-Platonism, which is by now in an apparently incongruous and unworthy alliance with the former. Without resorting to drastic persecution, he tries to smother Christianity by curtailing its educational activities, especially where they included a general liberal education; also by suspending the Church's privileges and immunities.

Council at Alexandria receives back the Nicenes as well as most of the semi-Arian party, who now begin to lean towards the former. On the schism at Antioch, the council wishes to accept Meletius in consideration of his recent confession. However, schism is reopened by Lucifer of Calaris (Cagliari), who denounces Meletius and <sup>supports</sup> ~~has~~ the Eustathian Paulinus, whereat the former rejoins Acacius, who has accepted the deity of Christ but rejected the deity of the Spirit. The Council makes a first pronouncement against Apollinarianism and for the deity of the Spirit, and smooths over the conflict between the Westerns, who accepted the formula *μία ὑπόστασις* and deemed



*ἡρεῖς ὑποβιάσεις* heretical, and the Easterns, who took the reverse position; on the ground that no distinction could be drawn between *οὐσία* and *ὑποστάσις*; both positions admitted. Afraid of his great power in his diocese, Julian orders Athanasius's fourth exile.

363 Julian killed in action against Sassanid Persia (26th June), thus ending Constantine's dynasty. After a period of confusion, Jovian succeeds. He reverses the anti-Christian elements of Julian's policy, but remains neutral on theological issues. Return of Athanasius.

364 Jovian dies (Feb. 16th); succeeded by Valentinian in the West and his brother Valens in the East. The former remains neutral; the latter attempts a Homoean revival. Previously, Council at Lampsacus deposes Eudoxius and completes restoration of the semi-Arians; adopts formula *ὁμοίου κατ'οὐσίαν*, and comes to no definite conclusion about the Spirit.

365 Valens orders the re-expulsion of Nicene bishops expelled under Constantius. Last exile of Athanasius.

366 Athanasius readmitted and returns (Feb. 1st).

366-73 Athanasius spends his last seven years in peace. In the remainder of the East, Valens attempts to restore the Homoean supremacy

but his success is limited. The Cappadocians, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, fl. in this and succeeding period. Rise of controversy about the Holy Spirit *pari passu* with decline of Arianism in its Christological form. About this time there is the first unmistakable evidence of of Pneumatological heresies like the Macedonians, the Tropici and the Pneumatomachi, whose parties included the recalcitrant Old Arians and Anomoeans as well as the more anti-Alexandrian Conservatives and semi-Arians even when they accepted the Nicene Christology. Apollinaris, Bishop of Laodicea (362-378) fl., and his heresy is the other principle doctrinal problem for the Church. Athanasius and Basil try unsuccessfully to heal schism of Antioch, but disagree about Marcellus, Basil (Ep. 69 and 266) wanting Athanasius to condemn him. Athanasius unwilling. Athanasius later accepts subscription of the Marcellian party to almost all the orthodox Nicene faith in the non-Sabellian sense.

- 373 Death of Athanasius at Alexandria (May 2nd).
- 375 Gratian, the new Western Emperor, rejects, for the first time, the pagan title of Pontifex Maximus, and pursues an energetic pro-Christian and anti-Pagan policy.



378ff. War with Goths in Balkan Peninsula.

Valens killed in disastrous defeat at Adrianople. Succeeded by Theodosius I, who pursues an energetically pro-orthodox policy, and after one overture to the Arians in 383, turns all the machinery of government against them. This is the end of Arianism among the original stocks of the Roman world, although it holds a dominating position in the Gothic invaders until the conversion to Catholic Christianity of Clovis, King of the Franks (end of 5th century).

381 Council of Constantinople, the Second Oecumenical Council, which issues the Constantinopolitan Creed (popularly mis-called the Nicene Creed). Deity of Christ expressed more strongly, and for the first time definitive expression given to the Deity of the Spirit.

381-431 Gradual suppression of paganism under succession of Christian Emperors, which also militates against classical culture generally. Last Olympic Games, 393. From this time on, the Eastern Empire becomes "Byzantine" as distinct from Hellenic or Hellenistic, and the Athenian and other philosophical schools languish long before their suppression a century later by Justinian. The Western Roman Empire disintegrates under pressure of barbarian

invasions; sack of Rome by Alaric, 410.

In the Church, asceticism reaches its height in the East; Simeon Stylites fl.(?)

Among theologians and Church leaders,

Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Theodoret flourished; the troublesome heresies were Pelagianism and the antithetical Christological heresies of Eutychianism (Christ had only one Nature) and Nestorianism (Christ had two Hypostases).

- 431 Council of Ephesus (Third Oecumenical Council) condemns Nestorianism and pronounces the Virgin Mary as *Θεότοκος* under influence of Cyril of Alexandria.

Eutychianism or Monophysitism is specially associated with Alexandria, Nestorianism with Syria.

- 444 Cyril of Alexandria dies. Then the extreme Eutychians gain the upper hand in Alexandria.

- 451 Council of Chalcedon (Fourth Oecumenical Council) repeats condemnation of Nestorianism but also condemns Eutychianism and issues definitive credal statement on relationship between the Deity and Humanity of Christ. Since then there have been dissident Nestorian Churches along the line from Syria to Central Asia and China, while the Coptic Church in Egypt and Ethiopia is Monophysite to this day.



The above table indicates the great difficulties which confront critical scholarship where Athanasius is concerned. If there was one characteristic of his lifetime it was that it was a period of extraordinarily rapid change in almost every relevant respect. Indeed, it is doubtful whether there has ever been another comparable period in Church history after the New Testament itself; there is no such time before, and the only age subsequently that one would be safe in admitting as even comparable is the Reformation (we cannot yet evaluate our own times!) Athanasius was born with the Roman Empire as pagan as ever, during his boyhood the persecution of Diocletian raged; and he died with the militant orthodoxy of Gratian and Theodosius I just around the corner, and the whole complex of the old Graeco-Roman heathen culture on its way out. In between, the Emperors had pursued almost every possible type of policy, sometimes with kaleidoscopic changes. And the first years of his maturity saw the pivotal change of his time, the decisive step in one of the great revolutions of history, which was begun, carried through and all but entirely completed during his lifetime, the revolution that has made "Constantinianism", for good or ill, a permanent feature of Church life. The great social collapse of the Roman world, as described by, for example, Rostovtzeff,<sup>(8)</sup> occurred in the third century rather than the fourth, and the final military and administrative decomposition of the Western Empire in particular was subsequent to the death of Athanasius, but even here there was change enough during his actual lifetime. Almost as important as the change in relationship between Church and State were the changes in the internal

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(8) "The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire".  
Oxford, 1926

life of the Church. The era saw the rise of monasticism and the Oecumenical Council. Above all, when Athanasius was a boy, theology had been relatively quiescent for a generation. The Church's sufferings were at the hands of rank heathendom, and, notwithstanding such cases as Paul of Samosata and the continuing effects of the Gnostic, Marcionite, Montanist and Sabellian controversies, it is fair to say that the most serious disturbances to the fellowship of the Church were occasioned by the conflict between rigorism and leniency, especially as applied to one's behaviour under persecution. Suddenly, after 320 A.D., when the Church to all appearances was entering a time of well-earned rest, it was treated to the ironic, painful and novel spectacle of the rabies theologorum disrupting and torturing the Church as much as any persecutor. And the material content of the issues raised underwent a marked change. Whatever our views on the antiquity of Arianism on the one hand and Trinitarian orthodoxy on the other, it cannot be denied that the effect of the Arian controversy was to make the Church face the issue of Christology and the doctrine of God rigorously, as it had never done before. Even Cardinal Newman, who is interested in maintaining that the Nicene theology in the full sense was the esoteric teaching of the Ante-Nicene Church, has to admit that the controversy forced the Church to put its doctrine down in public.<sup>(9)</sup> The chaotic long-drawn-out character of the history of the Arian controversy between Nicaea in 325 and Constantinople in 381 is a sure sign that the Church was not prepared for it, and that Newman's position is untenable. Most serious of all, the theologians had to evolve short

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(9) "The Arians of the Fourth Century", 3rd. ed. 1871, esp. pp. 42-65. For a similar view, see Mùhler, *Op. cit.*, esp. 193-198, and Lebreton, "Histoire du Dogme de la Trinite", *passim*. All three are Roman Catholics.



concise statements which could function as credal tests by the use of a maddeningly unco-operative vocabulary, especially as regards the key issue of the Homocousian; this is one cause of the credal instability which Athanasius describes in the "De Synodis".(10)

Finally, Jesus Christ, who forms the subject matter of the Arian controversy, is essentially mysterious, but the door was locked and bolted against the luxury of the Way of Silence. It ill becomes subsequent generations, including the present one, to regard with any complacent superiority the Christological and Trinitarian formulae of the First Four Councils and the controversies of the intervening periods; for all their handicaps, that age did at least as well as any succeeding age (with the exception of the Filioque issue). But the upshot of all this was that the age was characterised by sheer bewilderment as much as anything else, of which the ostentatious assurance of all parties was only a mask; indeed, notwithstanding the traditional (and, in the main, true) picture of Athanasius contra mundum, it is likely that even he himself was not exempt from the general uncertainty. The worst problem in fact was cleared up only when the Cappadocians changed the meanings of the words by differentiating clearly, for the first time, between *οὐσία* and *ὑπόστασις*. The result of all this was a generation of change and confusion; the parties split and reunited; alliances were made and broken in a moment, and we have the spectacle of the Councils of Rimini and Seleucia performing a feat which to any subsequent generation is a complete somersault, in a manner which suggests that however great was the Imperial pressure, it was not the entire explanation. And last but not least, no sooner did Arianism pass its zenith than the focus

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(10) Chapters 21-32.

shifted to other fields of heresy, in particular to the Humanity of Christ and to the Holy Spirit; these developments were in full swing during Athanasius's lifetime, although (yet another complication) not during his prime of life; there is no means of answering the question of whether Athanasius, at the age of 64 or more, was physiologically capable of attending to all his other duties and at the same time writing the "Later Treatises" attributed to him. In any case, he began his theological life in a period of theological decline, when some form of Origenism is generally presumed to have been the prevailing trend, and, having lived through a time of troubles and vicissitudes in which he was beyond any doubt the Mt. Everest of the theological world, he died with the Cappadocians in full flower. To conclude, Athanasius lived at a time of extraordinarily and, it is not too much to say, uniquely rapid change as well as confusion in theology, and as for nearly all his adult life he was the leading figure in the Church, there is a certain presumption that he would be deeply involved, either for or against, as regards any theological movement or principle that was in existence at the time.

But that very circumstance which constitutes an obstacle to the critic also makes literary fraud much easier, and his reputation as the orthodox theologian in excelsis would have been an added temptation. For that reason, the critic cannot be absolved from his task, although he must proceed with great caution.

Unfortunately, even this is not the whole story. The revolutionary character of the age confronts the critic with another factor which is very difficult to evaluate precisely, but which must never be neglected, and that is the psychology of man in a revolutionary age. This is something that, for better or worse, we



know in our age, which is revolutionary in ways which it is unnecessary to describe in detail here. Now the great Protestant scholars in the century or less before 1914 had no idea of this at all; how could they? For all the activities of Bismarck and his policy of "Blood and Iron", the period was essentially stable, and continuous progress, which is what the Victorians expected, is a very different thing from the revolutionary character of the fourth or twentieth centuries. Even Marxism and Darwinism never acquired the obvious revolutionary menace of twentieth-century Communism. Roman Catholic scholarship was even less capable of appreciating the point at issue, because of the extraordinary precautions inherent in the Romanist system against anyone feeling internally, as distinct from externally, the menace of revolutionism. The psychological state in question is an intense but highly ambivalent combination of mobility and expectancy, on the one hand, and inertia on the other. We all tend to go out to meet our destiny, whether in joyful expectation or great dread, long before it is within our range; we develop a hypersensitivity to the movement of history. Yet for all this we are all the time looking back to the past; we instinctively base our whole ways of thought and action on conditions that were once familiar but no longer exist; we continue to fight old enemies, and for all our expectancy fail miserably to recognise either new foes or friends. The critic may come to the same conclusions as his predecessors, but, unless he does his work with full understanding of issues such as these, he cannot, as we now understand, do even the literary criticism properly in the field of the fourth century. This applies supremely to Athanasius. With this in mind, we shall now proceed to examine the works of Athanasius, in order.



## CHAPTER I.

### The CONTRA GENTES and the DE INCARNATIONE VERBI DEI.

There is no real doubt that the above two works are genuine and represent Athanasius's earliest thought.<sup>(1)</sup> We may summarise this position under five heads: (1) That these two are in some sense one work, or are at least very closely related to each other; (2) That they are genuine works of Athanasius; (3) That they together constitute a species of apologetic literature, although it is a case of an apology "from positions of strength"; (4) That they were not written for any definite individual, but their destination (or hypothetical destination, if they were written as an academic exercise) was mankind at large; and (5) that they were the first writings of Athanasius, the date being A.D. 318 or a little later, and in any case represent his earliest thought; (if they were an academic exercise, we should perhaps say, his earliest thought or the theology which he imbibed at the Catechetical Institute).

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(1) See Hoss, "Studien über das Schrifftum und die Theologie des Athanasius auf Grund einer Echtheitsuntersuchung Athanasius 'Contra Gentes et De Incarnatione'" which is a definitive study of the question, and the references to other authorities on pp. 1-2. See also for a similar study, Stülcken, "Athanasiana", pp. 1-23, and Cross, "The Study of St. Athanasius", 11-14. Dräseke ("Studien Kritiken", 1893, pp. 251-315,) opposed the traditional authorship, maintaining that Athanasius could not have been the author, since his style as exemplified in the Anti-Arian treatises does not correspond to that of Athanasius, being inter alia too long-winded, that the book displayed too much knowledge of astronomy and ancient literature and philosophy, that the historical and other background is that of Palestine at a later period, and that the *ὁμολογία* (C.G. I.) refers to Macarius of Jerusalem, an orthodox presbyter. Therefore, he puts the date at about 350, and suggests Eusebius of Emesa as the author, whose hobby was astronomy. Stülcken's dry verdict is that all this represents the opposite of the truth with rare precision, while Hoss, more painstakingly but as effectively, does what Cross, loc. cit. describes as the hardly necessary operation of demolishing a weak case. Otherwise the facts that we are presenting are generally agreed, except for Eduard Schwartz (see below p.37) and some of his successors. The important point in our discussion is not that the works are genuine, but that they are the earliest works of Athanasius, and are in effect, ante-Nicene.

Loofs, PRE (3rd ed.), Pt. II, 199 and 202-5, toys with the <sup>contrary</sup> idea, and finds it consistent with the idea of a single continuous development of the Homousian. See below p.35<sup>f</sup> and 204.



On the first point, we have the external evidence of Jerome, who wrote, in "De Viris Illustribus LXXXIV": "Feruntur eius (i.e. Athanasii) adversum gentes libri duo", and in his edition of the works of Athanasius places these two works, described in this way, at the beginning. In the library of Photius, the first place is occupied by the titles as they are known at present. Although the conclusion is not free from all doubt, the statement of Jerome, in conjunction with other evidence, can be accepted as supporting the contention which we are making. The internal evidence is strong. The very beginning of the "De Incarnatione" is as follows: "Whereas in what precedes we have drawn out - choosing a few points from among many - a sufficient account of the error of the heathen concerning idols....", which can refer only to the "Contra Gentes", especially chs. 8-26, and it is almost immediately succeeded, in chs. 2-5, by a fairly accurate resumé of the whole contents of this former book. Similar reminiscences occur in "De Inc." 4. (P.G.<sup>xxv</sup> 104B): ὥσπερ ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις ἐλέχθη, referring to men being the authors of their own evil (vide C.G. 2 (P.G. XXV 5C) and ff.) "De Inc." 11 (P.G. XXV 116C): ὥσπερ ἐν τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν εἴρηται and ὥσπερ εἴρηται πρότερον, referring to devil-worship and its attendant wickedness (c.f. C.G. esp. 9 and 25). Athanasius's purpose in writing is to "set forth a few points of the faith of Christ; able though you are to find it out from the divine oracles, but yet generously desiring to hear from others as well". (C.G. 1 - P.G. XXV 4A); later in the first chapter, this Christian faith is described as being especially faith in the Cross as the mighty act and saving work of God, apparently in contradistinction to the naive view that it merely demonstrated Christ's mortality and fundamental insignificance. This promise was never fulfilled in the "Contra Gentes"; the reader waits for this till the "De Incarnatione", the first chapter of which is an almost pointed reminiscence of "Contra Gentes" 1.

Again, the last chapter (47) of "Contra Gentes" does not end with a doxology, which indicates that it does not stand by itself. Of course, especially to a Reformed theologian, there is a perceptible break in the argument between the two books, as the former postulates a renewed vision of the Word by man, evidently by man's own agency, whereas the latter revolves round the fact that God and God only could take the initiative in this regard. This suggests the possibility that in their original form the "Contra Gentes" was written without the "De Incarnatione" in mind, and that when the latter was written, it was apparent that the former would be a fitting prologue, and it was modified accordingly. But on both views, the conclusion stands that, when the "De Incarnatione" was written, practical antithesis of orthodox Christian faith was idolatry and not Arianism.

The second point, that these two books are genuine writings of Athanasius, need not detain us here. The style is similar to that of the undoubted historical and dogmatic works, including the "Contra Arianos". There is the same easy flowing sentence construction, the same simplicity of accident and syntax, the same natural rhetorical character, the same repetitiousness, the repetitiousness of a Wagner or a Barth, the idea that a thing can be properly understood only in relation to the whole, and that therefore the whole must be repeated in many contexts. The vocabulary, as regards unusual words, is similar; it would be prohibitively impracticable to describe this aspect in detail, but there is a full table in Hoss, op. cit. pp. 9-118. As regards comparison of the theology of these books with that of Athanasius's other writings, this will be the subject of the thesis as a whole. While we cannot agree that both theologies are virtually identical, as Hoss maintained, there is sufficient resemblance of the sort, that is appropriate between two groups of works composed at different times of life and in different environments.



The third conclusion, that the two works together constitute an apology, is evident from an examination of the contents, which will be made later in this chapter, especially now that we have established that both works can be taken together. However, this statement needs qualification in our day. To use the contemporary cold-war vocabulary, we always consider an apology as something done "from positions of weakness". In those days, an apology was primarily a speech for the defence, like the Apology of Socrates, and while in that sense the author would be in the weaker position, it is just as likely that, in another sense, he would be "in the position of strength"; that is there could be things on which his opponent would not have a leg to stand, and thus could be attacked unreservedly. This is the case even with, say, Justin's Apology, to a far greater extent than has usually been assumed, and also, the thing for which Justin was apologising is pretty well the entire Christian faith. Much more is this the case with Athanasius.

On the fourth statement, that the destination or hypothetical destination of the two books was mankind at large, there is not much argument. The references to ὦ μακάριε in C.G.1 (P.G.XXV 4A) and to φέρε κατὰ ἡκολουθίαν, μακάριε καὶ ἀληθῶς φιλόχριστε in De Inc.1 (P.G.XXV 97A) have been taken by Tillemont (2) and Dräseke to refer to the over-zealous Alexandrian Presbyter Macarius of the Ischyra case, or to the orthodox Presbyter Macarius of Jerusalem; the former

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(2) "Memoirs", Vol. VIII, p. 253. Tillemont, loc. cit. and Schwartz, "Der sogenannte 'Sermo Major de Fide' des Athanasius", 41 fn., accept that the statement of Athanasius, C.G. 1:4B, that "we have not at present in our hands the compositions of our teachers", presented as the ground for writing the books, as indicating that both writer and recipient were in exile. This in its context is more likely to be a conventional polite apology for a new work.



suggests that the books were written to Macarius by Athanasius from his exile in Rome in 339, the latter puts forward the semi-Arian Eusebius of Emesa as author, a most unlikely suggestion. However, even apart from the fact that the name Macarius was very common among Christians, the weight of evidence is against it being a proper name at all, but rather a common appellation of all true Christians; this is indicated by the form of the citation in the "De Incarnatione". Also, we know from the history of the time that Macarius's preoccupation, at any rate in and about 339 A.D., was with schism and heresy.<sup>(3)</sup> On the other hand, if we feel that the book is addressed to Christians in general, the reference to  $\omega^c \epsilon\lambda\lambda\eta\nu\epsilon\varsigma$  at the beginning of C.G. 21, and the continuance of the whole chapter in the second person plural, at first sight constitute a difficulty, as do various sections which are patently appeals to frank unbelievers, at least *inter alios*, e.g. De Inc. 28 (P.G. XXV 144D) "...let him who is incredulous about the victory over death receive the faith of Christ...." (let...receive =  $\lambda\alpha\mu\beta\acute{\alpha}\nu\epsilon\pi\omega$ ), or De Inc. 55 (P.G. XXV 193A-B): "...behold how the Saviour's doctrine is everywhere increasing,....and, thus beholding, worship the Saviour,...". The difficulties cease to give trouble if we remember two things. First, the form of these books is at least influenced by the diatribe, in which it is characteristic formally to address different groups of people, or even two opposed parties consecutively. (Cf. James 2:1ff. contrasted with vv. 18-21, and compare also Athanasius c. Ar. I-III *passim*, notably II, 37 init., 47 init., 48 init.)

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(3) The translation in the "Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers" Vol. 2, Athanasius, p. 36, can only be the result of taking the comma after  $\phi\epsilon\rho\epsilon$  instead of, with the Benedictine text, after  $\alpha\kappa\omicron\lambda\omicron\upsilon\theta\iota\acute{\alpha}\nu$ ; then the translation would be not "come now, Macarius (worthy of that name)", but "come now, Macarius (and let us do it faithfully)".



Still on the question of the destination of these works, (4)

F. L. Cross points to the evidence of the recently discovered shorter Athens Text of the "Contra Gentes" and the "De Incarnatione". The variants are always of the type that do not materially affect the sense except in the case of De Inc. ch. 25, which seems to have been completely rewritten. In the Received Text, this chapter treats of various reasons why Christ died the way He did, in order to die in the manner officially accursed under the Law, to symbolise the reunion of Jew and Gentile by the horizontal extension of both hands, to be the Fulfillment typified by the serpent lifted in the wilderness, to be, in death, the Way that leads us to heaven, and to vanquish "the powers of the air" in their own element. In the short text, ch. 25 deals instead with the question of the relation, post-mortem and ante-Resurrectionem, between the Impassible Logos and the passible Body. This was one of the great points at issue in the later stages of the Arian controversy. As these two forms of the text are of apparently equal authority, Cross suggests that they represent two drafts of the same work, and that it was probably an academic exercise. There is another, slightly different possibility, in view of the importance at a later time of the issue raised in ch. 25 in the shorter text; that is, that the Athens text was a re-issue of the work at a considerably later date when the Arian controversy was well and truly under way. But either way this indicates that the "Contra Gentes" and "De Incarnatione", as we now have them, form probably a single work, which was in its "received" form an exercise intended, or hypothetically intended, for everyone in general and nobody in

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(4) Loc. cit. See above footnote (1), p. 24

particular.(5) It might be objected that this sort of theory obscures the necessary distinction between apologetic literature and the dogmatic and/or devotional material appropriate for committed Christians. But this is to put the distinction between Dogmatics and Apologetics in the wrong place. It is true that, for the edification of the Church, there must be an activity of pure dogmatics without any adulteration, and that when we apologise, it must be primarily in the old sense, for the faith, the whole faith, and nothing but the faith, but this does not alter the situation of the Alexandrian believers, which patently resembles our own in so many ways. The believer was exposed in the marketplace and elsewhere, to say nothing of the tribunal and the torture chamber, to all the scepticism and worse of his fellow-men whose common life he shared, so that even if one were an Anselm, he could not help carrying a Boso in his mind, and, what is more, unless he deceived himself so that the truth was not in him, he knew it. Thus, for both purposes, that even the outsider should be confronted with the whole Gospel, and that even the most convinced Christian be supplied with necessary material with a certain apologetic character, we should not be at all surprised to find the same material as direct reading matter for non-Christians, "speakers' notes" for Christians in a non-Christian setting, and mutual comfort and consolation for and among Christians themselves. Thus in the

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(5) See Cross, op. cit., 11-14, esp. 14. Also the "De Incarnatione" of Athanasius: "The Short Recension", by R. P. Casey, 1946, (Studies and Documents, ed. Kirsopp Lake et al.) and the "Athens Text of Athanasius", *Review* XIII; 1930. <sup>by the same author, Harvard Theological</sup> The long text, i.e. the old standard text, is believed to be the original. Casey (H. Th. R. 1930, p. 63) says, "In a period of such vigorous discussion and rapid development of Christology, it is almost inconceivable that anyone but the original author or one closely associated with him could have revised the work without leaving any recognisable trace of later controversies".



final analysis, the problem of the destination of these writings is not as important as has been made out.

Our final statement, that the two books are to be dated in or about A.D. 318, that is, during Athanasius's 23rd year approximately, has already been discussed above and partly vindicated, especially in our discussion of the Shorter Text, and of the question of Macarius. It remains to say that the relative absence of polemic against Arianism indicates that the works are pre-Arian. It is significant that the only definite mention of heresy in the two books is in C.G. 6, on the question of evil, where the heretics mentioned are the Gnostics and Marcionites, as if religious dualism was the typical heresy; this would have been inconceivable if the books were written with the Arian controversy in full swing. Nor can the concluding words of De Inc. 24, that Christ was crucified to preserve His Body undivided, that "no pretext be afforded to those who would divide the Church", be held to refer to Arianism. For if there is one thing (see below) that Athanasius said in season and out of season about the Arians and Arianism, it is not that they divided the Church, but that Arianism and the Church were mutually incompatible, that Arianism was "unkirchliche", (6), that by its very nature to speak of Arians dividing the Church was a solecism. The words are more likely to refer to the succession of Rigorist anti-latitudinarian schisms that plagued the early Church, particularly after persecutions. (There were four great schismatic groups of this type prevailing in 318 A.D., the Novatians, Donatists, Meletians, and in a slightly different sense, the Montanists). The description of Christ's doctrine as (De Inc. 49:184D)

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(6) In the exact sense in which Karl Barth called his magnum opus the "kirchliche Dogmatik".



"one and the same, from one end of the earth to the other", is a hyperbole, but even as such it would have been impossible, for Athanasius, during the Arian controversy, at any rate without a specific denial that the Arians were to be counted as Christians at all. The many references to Christ's triumph as virtually complete, along with those pointing to paganism and its immoralities, persecution, deification of emperors, etc., as still going concerns or at least vivid recent memories, (7) suggest the period before the unpleasant surprise of the Arian controversy would have begun to monopolise the attention of men. In the same way, the people of the Alliance against the Axis during World War II all felt, with good reason, that the war was as good as won after Stalingrad and El Alamein, even though Nazi Germany survived for another 2½ years during which much effort was still needed for bringing the victory home, and during which its bloody atrocities exceeded anything that had gone before; the latter half of the war was plainly no time for slackness; such would likewise have been the feeling after the Milvian Bridge. The reference to the Goths in De Inc. 51 (P.G. XXV 188C) in the list of barbarian peoples need not be taken as referring to Ulfilas the Arian about 350 A.D. (as Dräseke does; he also accepts this, of course, as further evidence against Athanasian authorship); apart altogether from the possibility of rhetorical exaggeration, there was a Gothic bishop at Nicaea, and in any case the point of the passage is not that there were necessarily fully established Christian Churches among all these peoples, but that missionary work could even begin to yield fruit among people who were impervious to anything else in the way of higher Graeco-Roman civilisation or ethics. Nor

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(7) Cf. "De Incarnatione", 30, 46-55 passim, with C.G.9:20D, where it is said that the Senate proclaimed the emperors gods "not long since even if it be not still the case", (οὐ πολλῶν προτέρων, ἢ τὰ ἅλα καὶ μέχρι νῦν) and especially with De Inc. 27-29.



can it be objected that a man of about 20 years of age could not have written in such an easy, flowing, developed style as we find in these books; a man with a thorough literary education, as it was at that time, would have been able to do just that, and the relatively easier circumstances of the period about 318 would have been more conducive to this style than any other time of his life. Last of all, we cannot deny that a man of his age would be familiar with the immoralities of heathen worship as described in the "Contra Gentes". This can follow only if we assume that a "Victorian" upbringing and physiology was the normal thing in history, instead of the rare exception. An intelligent young man in Alexandria as it was then would have been aware of the facts of life at an early age anyway;(8) if he were an educated man, his awareness would be increased and not diminished, as is so often the case now, because the liberal (sic!) education, with un-Bowdlerised texts, often dealt with very little other than the crimes and immoralities of classical mythology, drama and history. And what is more, it must be remembered that the practice of systematic obscenity, as typified by the Dragoons of Louis XIV, the Nazi S.S., etc., not only seems to be a permanent disease of fallen man, but inevitably runs riot whenever there is persecution.(9) So, whatever were the actual experiences of Athanasius and/or his closest friends during the persecution of Diocletian, we can be certain that even in his boyhood his contact with sexual immorality was, by our own familiar standards, of an unusually pungent character.

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(8) Puberty is now apparently reverting to the age of 12-13, as in classical times, from 16-17 in Victorian society.

(9) Cf. also, for the Arian persecutions, the historical works of Athanasius, passim, esp. Hist. Arian. 55.

Certain passages have been held to be anti-Arian polemical, e.g. C.G. 46:93B: "And being the good Offspring of Him Who is good, and True Son, He is the Father's Power and Wisdom and Logos, not being so by participation, (10) nor as if these qualities were imparted to Him from without, as they are to those who partake of Him and are made wise by Him and receive power and reason in Him, but He is the Father's own (11) *Ἀὐτοσοφία, Ἀὐτολόγος, Ἀὐτοδύναμις...*", and again De Inc. 32:152C: "... (the Resurrection proves that)... He is the true Son of God, being from Him, as from the Father, His own (*ἴδιος* - no article) Logos and Wisdom and Power..." and again, De Inc. 47:180C: "...Christ has been recognised as True God, as God the Logos of God...", (12) and De Inc. 55:193D: "...it is clear ...that He Who abides is God and the True Son of God, Only-Begotten Logos," (13) appear to have a definite anti-Arian flavour at first sight. But on the contrary, the very fact that these matters have been brought up without reference to any of the characteristic Arian slogans, not to say jingles, like *ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν* (there was once when He was not), is proof enough that Arianism was not in the forefront of his mind, even when he is discussing the absolute propriety of the Logos to the Father, and was therefore taking a line that was

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(10) *ἄγαθὸν ἐξ ἀγαθοῦ γέννημα καὶ ἀληθινὸς υἱὸς ὑπάρχων, Δύναμις ἐστὶ τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ Σοφία καὶ Λόγος, οὐ κατὰ μετοχήν ταῦτα ὦν...*

(11) *ἴδιος* - We have left the following words untranslated; the simplest translation would be "Wisdom Itself", etc. Logos we have always left untranslated as the title of the Son, since its exact meaning (*λόγος* = rationality, or *λόγος* = word) is an open question.

(12) *Θεὸς ἀληθινός, Θεοῦ Θεὸς Λόγος.*

(13) *τὸν Θεοῦ υἱὸν ἀληθινὸν μονογενῆ Λόγον* (accusative and infinitive)



to bring him into collision with Arian doctrine from the outset. Even more significant is the other side of the matter, the complete absence of the Nicene terminology, the complete absence of  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\rho\alpha\varsigma$  or any word or phrase derived from it to indicate the relation of the Logos to God the Father. Nor would Athanasius after Nicaea have described God simply as being "beyond all substance ( $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\rho\alpha\varsigma$ ) and human conception", (14) (C.G. 2:50), nor would he have been very happy about the later corrections of it to "originate essence" ( $\gamma\epsilon\upsilon\eta\tau\acute{\eta}\varsigma$   $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\rho\alpha\varsigma$ ) C.G. 35:69A and 40:80C.

While we are on these questions, it must be pointed out that for the reasons that we have been discussing above the hypothesis of Loofs (15) concerning the chronology of Athanasius's works is most unlikely. It depends on assigning an early date, about 338, to the "Orationes Contra Arianos" I-III, and unreservedly accepting the authenticity of the "Expositio Fidei" and "In illud, Omnia mihi tradita sunt" as among Athanasius's earliest books. In these, according to Loofs, the emphasis was on the triplicity of the Trinity, with the phrase  $\tau\rho\epsilon\iota\varsigma \delta\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  favoured. Then there is supposed to have been a steady change towards emphasis on the unity of God, the Nicene Homousian, which became complete in the later anti-Arian writings like the "De Decretis", with the hypothetically early "Contra Arianos" occupying an intermediate position in which Athanasius was not yet prepared to commit himself to the Homousion. On this hypothesis passages such as those quoted above would emphasise the close connection of the Logos with the Father and therefore be admissible as evidence for a relatively late dating of the "Contra Gentes" and "De Incarnatione", say, at the hypothetical date of the

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(14) An Origenist expression. Cf. C. Cels. 7:42. De Prin. I:5. Prestige, "God in Patristic Thought", p. 191, maintains that in these Origenist passages and here, the word  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\rho\alpha\varsigma$  means "intelligible reality", which meaning Celsus accepted. Orig. C. Cels. 7:45

(15) See below, fn. (1) of this chapter.



"Contra Arianos". The author does not accept this hypothesis, and if any attempt is made to use it in support of a late date of the "Contra Gentes - De Incarnatione", the hypothesis fails. If the "Contra Arianos" dates from 338, the "Contra Gentes - De Incarnatione" in Loofs's hypothetical character would have also been explicitly anti-Arian. Likewise, it is highly doubtful that a man whose main interest in his earlier life had been in the triplicity of the Trinity would have written such a strongly anti-Arian magnum opus as early as 338, much less would he have rendered himself liable to attack along with Marcellus of Ancyra and Eustathius of Antioch, for this was his position almost from the beginning of his episcopate; rather would he sympathise perhaps even with Eusebius of Caesarea, certainly with the later Semi-Arian Basil who was substituted for the deposed Marcellus. Athanasius's failure to treat the Homoousion in the "Contra Arianos" must be explained in another way.(16) This still leaves open the difficult question of the relation between the Origenism of the earlier writings cited by Loofs, and indeed of the tradition of Alexandria as classically exemplified by Dionysius, with its emphasis on the triplicity of the Trinity, and the sort of Logocentric unity which we find in this pair of writings. However, there is a much more plausible explanation, to which we shall return when we have reviewed the contents of the "Contra Gentes".

There are two difficult critical matters to which we must turn our attention before we conclude this section, but fortunately they do not affect the important conclusions to any great extent. Firstly, if the later date, 328, for the beginning of the Arian

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(16) See Hoss, op. cit. 49-50, and Kelly, "Early Christian Creeds", 257-261, where the position of Loofs is also criticised.



controversy is correct - which the author feels to be rather dubious - it actually makes the critical problems associated with the writing of the "Contra Gentes" and "De Incarnatione" much easier, since there would be less ground for incredulity that one so young could write such a theological work. The other issue is that raised by Schwartz,(17) Cross,(18) and Kelly,(19) of the relation between these books and the "De Theophania" of Eusebius of Caesarea, usually dated about 331-2. Schwartz's case, which is certainly true in the latter instance, is that both works belong to the class of official apologies which were published in large numbers in the Constantinian period for the large number of new converts from paganism; these required the authority of a bishop or at least a presbyter, and as Athanasius was elected a bishop when he was still a deacon, this means that the date of writing must have been at the earliest after 328. This is by no means unlikely, since on general grounds 328-330 is quite a possible date. Kelly accepts the general reasoning of Schwartz, and suggests that the books were written in reply, even if not expressly in reply, to the work of Eusebius, and would put them as late as 335-337. The same objections apply here as to the theory of Loofs, above, since, especially at the date suggested by Kelly, Eusebius had clearly lined himself up with the Arian party in their attack against Marcellus of Ancyra. The striking resemblance of some passages in both authors cannot be cited as evidence in favour of this last hypothesis, even if Athanasius was prepared to use the thoughts of a man who, though very much his senior, was fast becoming his personal enemy, for a time. The reason

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(17) "Der sogenannte 'Sermo Maior de Fide' des Athanasius", p. 41 fn.

(18) Op. cit. pp 14-15.

(19) "Early Christian Creeds", p. 257.



is that, as Cross points out, where the passages in question occur, there is no literary join to be detected in Athanasius, whereas there is in Eusebius, and that therefore, either Eusebius borrowed from Athanasius, which is if anything less likely still under the contemporary circumstances, or both were borrowing from a third source that preceded both. On the whole, the author finds the hypothesis of Cross, that the "Contra Gentes" and "De Incarnatione" constituted, in their original form, an academic exercise, more plausible. To return to the difficult question of the literary relationship between Athanasius and Eusebius, the author has not been able to examine the matter in perfect detail, but feels that there is very little, if any, direct literary evidence of copying beyond what one would mathematically expect as the accidental consequences of the general properties of the books in question, in particular to the pointed general resemblances as regards content. Of the older authorities, neither Migne nor S. Lee, in his English edition and translation, <sup>of De Theophrastus</sup> (20) comment on any direct textual likenesses. We shall have something more to say about the former later, when we have considered the theology of the two books. As we shall show later, (21) it is highly probable that any signs of literary dependence are most likely to be due to a common relationship to an older tradition, which appears to be in fact two older traditions; on the one hand, philosophical natural theology, and on the other hand, the more dogmatic aspects of the theology of Origen and his successors. On what we know of both Athanasius and Eusebius, it can be assumed that both would have been in sufficient contact with both elements, but that in each

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(20) Cambridge, 1843.

(21) See below, pp. 88-9.



case, Athanasius would have been in closer and more intimate contact, being a thorough Alexandrian in background. For the same reason, and also because of his greater innate ability, Athanasius would have had far more cultural sense and a far more philosophical (in the best sense) and orderly mind than Eusebius, for all his great polymathy, could ever attain to. This is sufficient reason why, whatever the relation between the composition of the works, it is Athanasius and not, in the least, Eusebius who should appear as the definitive expounder of the common tradition, and that Athanasius, as distinct from Eusebius should be able to <sup>expound it</sup> ~~do so~~, and even to draw on common sources, without any literary unevenness or sign of join. The other fact that they are the two surviving examples of this tradition will also be sufficiently explained after we have considered the contents of the Athanasian writings.

Together with the unanimous later testimony as to the genuineness of the "Contra Gentes" and "De Incarnatione", the above arguments confirm that they are the first writings of Athanasius, and that they are his ante-Nicene theology, or his theology before his conflict with the Arians. Of course, no absolutely definite time can be set. Hoss, (22) accepting the traditional chronology, considers that 318 is the most likely date, excludes all other dates before the Council of Nicaea on the ground that in that case there would have been some sign of the Arian controversy, and afterwards postulates the period between 325 and the Arian revival about 330 as a secondary possibility; the fact that the Arian controversy completely took the place of paganism as the chief field of the Church's interest until the time of Julian the Apostate would mean that the 360's would be the only other possibility, however remote, and in view of the general character of the work it is

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(22) Op. cit. 85-95.

very remote indeed. However, we cannot accept the whole of this reasoning, since it neglects the inertia of the human mind. The persecution of the Eastern co-Emperor Licinius in 323 shows that paganism was still a force to be reckoned with, even militarily, for long after 318, and its sheer presence would be important for long after that. Even more important, it is the standard experience of people with every revolution - and this would be true a fortiori in the case of such sudden and revolutionary change as that from heathen persecution to the Arian controversy - that it takes years to see with certainty whether it is merely temporary or a permanent change in the course of history. Perhaps not till 330 or after was it perfectly clear that Arianism had passed the point of no return. An interesting confirmation is provided by the Festal Letters, as Hoss again points out in this connection, in which the first reference to the Arian controversy is in the Letter for 338, although in this case it is probable that Athanasius would have preferred not to say anything more about a matter of this character in such a communication than he could avoid; it is remarkable how little direct reference to Arianism there is in any of the letters. This means that (on the traditional chronology of the Arian controversy) even a man like Athanasius could quite easily have been interested primarily in the subject-matter of the "Contra Gentes" and "De Incarnatione", at any rate for the purpose of public writing, even in the early stages of the Arian heresy before Nicaea. This would have been doubly likely if, as Cross suggests, the two works are best considered as an academic exercise, with the implication that Athanasius was still a student. Thus, our preferred conclusion for the dating of these books, in their original form, whichever text it is, would be, 318, the most likely date, and then with an irregularly and uncertainly decreasing probability until 330 or a little



later at the latest. If the year of Athanasius's birth be accepted as 295, we could perhaps put the terminus a quo even a year or two earlier. But the important point is, anyway, that these books are an ante-Nicene type of theology even though it is not quite certain that they were written before the Council of Nicaea, and even in the less likely event that they were written some years after it.

A: CONTRA GENTES: Content.

I The first chapter begins with a formal and polite apology, of the traditional type, for undertaking to write a book on Christian faith and doctrine; he mentions that the truth of Christ is self-witnessing and self-authenticating, that Scripture is enough in any case, and that if there is a place for anything else, there have been many other books written; yet, "as we have not at present in our hands the compositions of our teachers, we must communicate in writing to you what we learned from them - the faith, namely of Christ the Saviour, lest any should hold cheap the doctrine taught among us (1) or think faith in Christ irrational".(2)

This faith in Christ is characterised primarily as faith in the Cross as the redeeming work of God, as distinct from the natural man's interpretation of it as merely the failure of one's life-work. "For if after the Cross all idolatry was overthrown...and Christ alone is worshipped and the Father known through Him...(how can we)... regard the matter (3) as human, instead of confessing that He Who ascended the Cross is Logos of God and Saviour of the world?... (even as one must recognise the greatness of the Sun even

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(1) τὴν τοῦ καθ' ἡμᾶς λόγον διδασκαλίαν

(2) ἄλογον. These two uses suggest the ordinary Greek senses of "doctrine" and "rationality", although there is more than a hint of Barth's "Word of God, preached". (See esp. Ch. Dog. Vol. I, Pt. 1. pp. 98-111).

(3) πρᾶγμα; probably better, Deed.



when it is behind the clouds, so must we recognise that)...the Disposer and Ruler of such an order is God and the Word of God (4)..."

It is evident at once that Athanasius accepts unreservedly the Deity of Christ, and in particular that Christ as a Personal Agent is God, and that the Atonement through the Cross is the supremely significant act of Christ. The only question that could be asked here is whether Athanasius does not one-sidedly regard the Humanity of Christ as the veil or the concealment of the Deity, and on this point it is specially difficult to consider the former as something as unconnected in essence with the Deity as a cloud to the sun. This is the "plain man's view", and of course it is absolutely essential as <sup>an</sup> element in theology, (5) but the whole course of theology is a vindication of the connection between the Humanity and the Deity, as can be seen when we follow the development of Athanasius himself as a theologian.

II In chapter 2, Athanasius immediately begins to treat of God, Man and Sin, following in form, Genesis 1-3, in the manner that has become traditional in classical theology.

"In the beginning, wickedness did not exist. Nor indeed does it exist even now among those who are holy, nor does it in any way belong to their nature. (6) But men afterwards began to contrive it, and to elaborate it to their own hurt. (7) For God, Maker

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(4) ἀνάγκη τὸν ἀρχηγὸν καὶ ἡγεμόνα τοῦ τοιοῦτου κατορθώματος εἶναι, (ὁ) θεὸν καὶ (ὁ) θεὸς λόγον. The translation, which is mine, differs from Robertson's.

(5) Otherwise, one would have to accept the Hegelian identification of human and divine natures. This is why Barth insists, *passim*, that every unveiling of God is also a veiling.

(6) ὑπάρχει ... κατ' αὐτοῦς. — Lat. *adversus seipsos effingere*, which does not bring out the force of the Greek which is far more closely related to the doctrine of Original Sin in the Scriptural sense.

(7) ἐπινόειν ἥρξαντο καὶ καθ' ἑαυτῶν ἀνατυποῦσθαι. The finite verb is aorist, as are all others in this connection, suggesting a definite Fall. The Benedictine translation for ἀνατυποῦσθαι, etc. is "adversus seipsos effingere" which may be the best available, but it does not do justice to the Greek, with its implication of Original Sin.



of all and King of all, that has His Being beyond all substance and human discovery, (8), inasmuch as He is good and exceeding noble, made, through His Own Logos our Saviour Jesus Christ, the human race after our own image, and constituted man able to see and know realities through the likeness to Himself, (9), giving him also a conception and knowledge even of His own eternity, in order that... he might not ever either depart from his idea of God, (10), nor recoil from communion with the holy, (11), but having... God's own power from the Paternal Logos, he might rejoice and have fellowship with the Deity, living the life of immortality unharmed and truly blessed. For having nothing to hinder his knowledge of the Deity, he ever beholds... the image of God, God the Logos, after whose Image he was made, (12). He is awestruck as he contemplates that Providence which through Him (sc. the Word) extends to the Universe, being raised above things of sense and every bodily appearance, (13), but cleaving to the divine and thought-perceived things (14) in the heavens by the power of the mind, (15). For when the mind of men does not hold converse with bodies, nor has mingled with it from without aught of

(8) See above p. 35. It is a Platonic description of God or rather the Platonic monistic "Form of the Good". See Rep. Bk. VI:509, quoted by Justin, Dial. Tryph. 3. Cf. also Origen De Princ. I:5.

(9) καὶ τῶν ὁρτῶν αὐτοῦ θεωρητὴν καὶ ἐπιστήμονα διὰ τῆς πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁμοιώσεως. Pre-Athanasian exegetes, especially Clement and Origen, regarded the εἰκών and ὁμοίωσις of Gen. 1-26, LXX as referring to different levels, the latter being the higher level. Athanasius does not differentiate them in his mature work. Cf. Bernard, "L'image de Dieu d'après Saint Athanase", esp. 25-31.

(10) πάντας

(11) τῶν ἁγίων, either holy men or holy things or even perhaps "the holy".

(12) τὸν Θεοῦ εἰκόνα, τὸν Θεὸν λόγον, οὗ καὶ κατ'εἰκόνα καὶ ᾔσχονεν.

(13) τῶν αἰσθητῶν καὶ πάσης σωματικῆς φαντασίας.

(14) τὰ ... θεῖα καὶ νοητά. The latter was the regular term in Plato for things which require intellectual activity, as distinct from sense, for their understanding.

(15) τοῦ νοῦ - here and in general following.



their lust, but is wholly above them,..., then, transcending the things of sense and all things human, it is raised on high; and seeing the Logos, it sees ~~... (Such was the state of Adam in the Garden of Eden)~~ in Him also the Father of the Logos...."

III Thus, then,...the Demiurge (16) ...fashioned the race of men....But men...began to seek (17) in preference things nearer themselves. (in practice)...the body and its senses (18), so that...they began to regard themselves (19) ...(Such is the origin of sin, which is presented primarily as lust). (Adam)...as long as he kept his mind to God and the contemplation of God (20), turned away from the contemplation of the body. But when, by the counsel of the serpent, he departed from the contemplation of God (21), and began to regard himself, then they not only fell to bodily lust, but knew that they were naked, and knowing were ashamed. But they knew that they were naked, not so much of clothing ... as of the contemplation of divine things ..." (thence men became habituated to a life of lust, and thence arose crime; fear of death is due to excessive attachment to the body).

IV This chapter is a continuation of the actiology and development of evil, which is a continuing dynamic process because the

(16) ὁ Δημιουργός. Unfortunately, this is a normal word for an inferior artificer, as in Plato's "Timaeus". The corresponding verb is usually translated by Robertson as "to fashion".

(17) ἐβλήσαν, another aorist.

(18) αἱ τοῦτο αἰσθησεις.

(19) ἐαυτοὺς δὲ κατανοεῖν ἤρξαντο - another aorist.

(20) θεωρίαν. In general (See Liddell and Scott) θεωρία refers to the intellectual form of contemplation, or being a spectator in the best or worst sense.

(21) τῆς πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν διανοίας, ἐαυτὸν δὲ κατανοεῖν ἤρξαντο - yet another aorist.



soul, even though it has turned away from its own proper activity, "does not lose her mobility", (τοῦ κινεῖσθαι οὐ παύεται - 9B). There is one passage of interest, which has to be quoted at length (9C): "But good is, while evil is not (22). By what is, then, I mean what is good, in as much as it has its patterns from the God who is (23), but by what is not, I mean what is evil, in so far as it consists in a false imagination in the thoughts of men. For though the body has eyes to see the creation, and by its entirely harmonious construction (tr. inaccurate - συντάξεως, i.e. discipline) to recognise the Demiurge, and ears to listen to the divine oracle and laws of God, and hands both to perform works of necessity and to raise to God in prayer..."

This passage shows the virtually complete Platonism of Athanasius at this stage. We shall have occasion to deal with this matter more exhaustively when Athanasius treats of the soul in greater detail. The point here is the analysis of the process of knowing God; it appears to be a faculty innate in man which is identical to the Platonic θεωρία with which the mind contemplates higher things, and whose opposite is the contemplation of lower things, especially the things of the sense. This is so generally recognised as standard Platonism that there is no need to argue the point further, except that in the general resumé of the work we shall sound a note of caution against the tendency to indulge in theological Philippics against Plato (24). Of course, it involves

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(22) ὅντα δὲ ἐστὶ τὰ καλὰ, οὐκ ὅντα δὲ τὰ φαῦλα

(23) ἐκ τοῦ ὄντος Θεοῦ τὰ παραδείγματα ἔχει. Cf. Origen.

C. Cels. Bk. IV:66. Pell, "Die Lehre des heiligen Athanasius von der Sünde und Erlösung", p. 69, says that for Athanasius, evil is "das Nichtsein eines Seinsollenden", and settles for privatio as the description of evil.

(24) See below p. 85-86.

prima facie, a serious mis-exegesis of Gen. 3.(25) What God has reserved to Himself and banned for Adam and Eve is not contemplation of the things of the world, but rather something in His own Mystery. Their action in eating the fruit of the tree was not dictated by the prospect of a pleasant taste, but it was, firstly, an arrogant grasping after what God has kept to Himself, secondly, a pathological fascination with the evil which God has willed to exclude from man's contact altogether, for his own good, and finally, a vote of no confidence in God. It was to be a great privilege for Adam and Eve, not a wicked act, for them to enjoy under God created things, and this includes the full corporeal enjoyment of each other(26). The evil and perverted lust after natural things is the curse which is the consequence of the Fall, not its cause.

Thus, it appears that Athanasius is basing his apologetic on what might be called the subjective form of natural theology, that is, the idea that the soul has (or should have) by its very nature, the capacity to know God. In the next chapter, ch. 4, a modification is made of the earlier extreme Platonism, in that it actually gives a place to the contemplation and understanding of things. Compared with the theology of chapter 3, it appears to be an admission of the relatively subordinate validity of what might be termed objective natural theology, that is, that the soul can deduce the existence of God by the contemplation of the created order. This conjunction is characteristic of the "Contra Gentes" as a whole. The notion of evil being identified with non-existence and good with

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(25) Cf. for what follows K. Barth, Ch. Dog., Vol.III, Pt.I, pp.256-288, and also the sections on sin in Vol.IV, Pts.I, II and III. The author has adopted the Barthian schema of sin with open eyes, since it is so apposite.

(26) See Gen. 2:23-25, and K. Barth, Ch. Dog., III:I:299-315.



existence in its simpler form is rationalistic (27), but it cannot be discussed at all in this connection, as it is probably the most intractable problem in theology. It must be added that in its simple form it is specially plausible for Athanasius since the characteristic forms of sin, as the big central section of this book reveals, are bodily lusts and idolatry, which involves the worship of fictitious entities.

5 In the next chapter, this theme is continued; the soul of a sinner is compared to a grossly inattentive driver of a chariot.

6-7 Next, Athanasius discusses false theories of the origin of evil, that is, that it exists *ἐν ὑποστάσει καὶ καθ' ἑαυτὴν* (28), (P.G.XXV: 12D); therefore, it would have to be created either by God Himself (impossible) or by another creator - hence a metaphysical dualism between Good and Evil, which was the choice of certain heretics, that is the Gnostics and Marcionites; this position is contradicted by the Scriptural testimony of the Unity of God and also by the usual philosophical arguments against two opposed ultimates; they cannot merge, nor can one conquer the other, by definition, and as they are exhaustive and exclusive, there can be nothing else that can account for their division - a perfect summary of the metaphysical argument, whereby that which is ultimate can of its very nature be numerically only one. This denial of the hypostatic independence of evil is rightly a classical part of Christian theology.

(27) Unless one is, in modern terms, a Christian Scientist, (the modern equivalent of Gnosticism), one must accept that evil really exists. Yet the intractable paradox is that evil cannot have any real existence in the sense that it is what God wills, or that it plays any part in the economy of salvation. Even Karl Barth had to describe the ultimate principle of evil as "Das Nichtige" (E.T. "Nothingness") (Ch. Dog. Vol. III, Pt. III 289-368) (See also the sections on Doctrine of Sin in Vol. IV, Pts. I, II, III, and the resumé in IV:I:138-144)

(28) i.e. substantively and of itself.

End of 7 & 8-86 This long section, which need not detain us, is a discussion, from all points of view, of the cruder form of idolatry and its attendant immoralities. Naturally, there is great emphasis on animal-worship, and the animals are repeatedly described as *ἄλογοι*; (e.g. ch. 9 (P.G.XV 20AAB); ch. 11, p. 25B; ch. 14, p. 32B; ch. 19, p. 40A (ter) and B (bis); ch. 20, p. 41A; ch. 22 p. 44B (quater); ch. 26, p. 52B; see also ch. 27, p. 52C (bis).) In cases where the question arises of the idolatrous worship of men or of a theophany (in the non-Christian sense) in men, the doublet *ἄλογος καὶ λογικός* in some form or other is used (see ch. 9, p. 20B; ch. 20, p. 41A; ch. 22, p. 44B (bis)). Human sacrifice to such gods is described as sacrificing the higher to the lower, *λογικὰ τοῖς ἀκινῆτοις*. All this is described as, inter alia, a by-product of the *ἄλογία* of pleasure and passion (ch. 19, p. 40A (bis)), and of the rejection of Christ, *τὸν Θεὸν Λόγον* (ch. 8, p. 16D) or *τὸν ἀληθινὸν τοῦ Πατρὸς Λόγον* (ch. 23, p. 48A). It is evident that *λόγος* and compounds refer to the rationality that is in Man in the Aristotelian sense, and that this play on the Logos of God on the one hand, and *τὴν ἄλογον βίαν* on the other, is quite deliberate and, in fact, constitutes one of the main motifs of the "Contra Gentes".

27-29 Having completed the discussion of the grosser form of idolatry, Athanasius now turns his attention to the more sophisticated form, nature-worship, and its followers. "...Creation almost raises its voice against them, and points to God as its Maker and Demiurge...even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; Whom the would-be philosophers turn from to worship and deify the creation which proceeded from Him, and yet itself worships and confesses the Lord Whom they deny on its account. For if men are thus awestruck at the parts of Creation (29) and think that they are gods, they



might well be rebuked by the mutual dependence of those parts, which moreover makes known and witnesses to the Father of the Logos, Who is Lord and Maker of these parts also, by the unbroken law of their obedience to Him..†(Ps. 19:1, quoted)(ch. 27, p. 53A&B)(30) The rest of these three chapters is taken up by an exhaustive analysis of the mutual interaction, mutual dependence, and mutual reciprocity of the parts of nature upon each other, including the classical four elements; thus no element and no part of nature can be God, by the identical criticism that is to be made of Milesian Substantialism (i.e. if we choose, for instance, with Thales, water, it cannot be the Ultimate, or substance of all things, because there are some things that are obviously not water). Nor can God be the arithmetical sum of the universe, for "if He consists of parts, certainly it will follow that He is unlike Himself and made up of unlike parts", (ch.28, 57A)(31) Unfortunately, it is to be noticed that Athanasius says nothing about God being the constitutive as distinct from the arithmetical sum of the universe, and his denunciation of this doctrine is appropriate only to its latter form. At the end of ch. 29, having completed his discussion of anti-Christian doctrine, Athanasius calls upon us to "travel the way of truth, and behold the Ruler and Demiurge of the Universe, the Logos of the Father (32) in order that through Him we may apprehend the Father..." (29:60B)

30 Athanasius now proceeds to treat more exhaustively of what we have termed subjective natural theology, with special reference

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(30) Although Athanasius followed the LXX psalms throughout, the thesis, including references to Athanasian citations, will be according to the numeration of the English Bible.

(31) Cf. Plato, "Parmenides", 138 ff. esp. 146. This concept makes it difficult to see how God would not be God unless He were Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In this sense, each of the Persons is really part of God, although all are utterly alike and each is in another sense the whole of God.

(32) καὶ θεωροῦμεν τὸν ἡγεῖν καὶ δημιουργὸν τοῦ πάντος τὸν τοῦ Πατρὸς Λόγον.



to the soul. (As compared with the foregoing) "... the way of truth will aim at reaching the real and true God. But for its knowledge and accurate comprehension (33), there is need of none other save of ourselves. Neither, as God Himself is above all, is the road to Him afar off or outside ourselves, but it is in us, and it is possible to find it from ourselves, in the first instance... (quotes from Deut.30:14 and Luke 17:12)....For having within ourselves faith and the kingdom of God, we shall be able quickly to see and perceive the King of the Universe, the saving Logos of the Father...(and this road is) the soul ( $\psi\chi\eta$ ) of each one of us, and the intellect ( $\nu\omicron\upsilon$ ) which resides there. For by it alone can God be contemplated and perceived (34). Unless, as they have denied God, the impious men will repudiate having a soul; which is indeed more plausible than the rest of what they say, for it is unlike men possessed of an intellect to deny God, its Maker and Artificer. It is necessary then...to show briefly that each one of mankind has a soul, and that rational ( $\lambda\omicron\gamma\kappa\eta$ ); especially as certain of the heretics deny this also, thinking that man is nothing more than the visible form (35) of the body..."

31 "Then, the first confirmation that the soul of men is rational (36) is from its difference from irrational creatures ( $\tau\alpha \acute{\alpha}\lambda\omicron\gamma\alpha$ ). For this is why common use gives them that name, because, namely, the race ( $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\varsigma$ ) of mankind is  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\kappa\acute{\omicron}\nu$ . Secondly,...man alone reasons of things external to himself, and cogitates about things not present, and again reflects and judges the better of alternative reasonings. For the irrational beings see only what is present, and are impelled solely by what meets the eye, even if the consequences to them are injurious..." (Here follows an account of the relationship of the

(33)  $\pi\rho\acute{\omicron}\varsigma \delta\epsilon \tau\eta\nu \tau\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\varsigma \chi\rho\eta\sigma\iota\nu \kappa\alpha\iota \acute{\alpha}\kappa\rho\iota\beta\eta \kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\alpha}\lambda\eta\psi\iota\nu$ . For the emphasis on knowledge as the principle element of reconciliation, see Origen, C. Cels 1:28

(34)  $\theta\epsilon\omega\rho\epsilon\iota\sigma\theta\alpha\iota \kappa\alpha\iota \nu\omicron\epsilon\iota\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ . (35)  $\tau\omicron \phi\alpha\iota\nu\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu \epsilon\iota\delta\omicron\varsigma$ .  
(36)  $\tau\omicron\upsilon \lambda\omicron\gamma\kappa\eta\nu \epsilon\iota\nu\alpha\iota \tau\eta\nu \tau\omicron\upsilon\nu \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omega\nu \psi\chi\eta$ .



soul to the sensory and motor organs, which closely resembles the modern principles of cerebral excitation and inhibition, especially the latter, and, in general, cerebral dominance. The soul is compared with the player of a lyre in its relation to the body)... "But this alone is peculiar to mankind, and this is τὸ λογικόν in the soul of mankind, by means of which it differs from irrational beings, and shows that it is truly other than what is apparent in the body..."

(Dreams are adduced, and taken, as usual in the ancient world, as sources of E. S. P.)... "But to what can this be due save to the rational soul (37) in which man thinks of and perceives things beyond himself?

32 "We add a further point to complete our demonstration for the benefit of those who shamelessly take refuge in irrationality... (How can a mortal body even think of immortality? What can do this but) the rational and immortal soul?... (After more on the dominance of the soul and the occurrence of activities against the natural movements of the body)... Why, these things prove simply this, that the rational soul presides (ἡγεμονεύουσιν) over the body. For the body is not even constituted to drive itself, but is carried on at the will of another, just as a horse does not yoke itself, but is driven by his master. Hence, laws for human beings to practise what is good and to abstain from evil-doing, while to the irrational being evil remains unthought of and undiscovered, because they lie outside rationality and the process of understanding (38). I think then that the existence of a rational soul in man is proved by what we have just said".

33 (Here follow the traditional arguments for the immortality of the soul, the invalid negative argument from analogy compared with the body, the argument that the soul is the origin of the body's

{ (37) ψυχὴ λογικὴ - and likewise below  
 (38) τῆς λογικότητος καὶ τῆς κατὰ λόγον διανοίας.





motion and not vice versa, and that it can think of divine things even in extreme bodily weakness: (in general, its transcendence) "...For if even when coupled with the body it lives a life outside the body, much more shall its life continue after the death of the body, and live without ceasing by reason of God Who made it thus through His own Logos, our Lord Jesus Christ. For this is the reason why the soul thinks of and bears in mind things immortal and eternal, because it is immortal. And just as, the body being mortal, its senses also have mortal things as their objects, so, since the soul contemplates and beholds immortal things, it follows that it is immortal and lives for ever....This then is why the soul has the capacity for beholding God, and is its own way thereto, receiving not from without, but out of herself, the knowledge and apprehension of the Logos of God"(39).

34 "...Just as men denied God and worship ψυχὰ (=both soulless things and lifeless things), so also, in thinking they have not the rational soul, they receive at once the punishment for their folly, namely, to be reckoned among the irrational things: and so, since as though from lack of soul they superstitiously worship soulless gods, they are worthy of pity and guidance. But if they claim to have a soul and pride themselves on their rationality, and that rightly, why do they... venture to go against reason (παρὰ λόγον), and... make themselves out higher even than the Deity? For having a soul that is immortal and invisible to them, they make a likeness of God in things visible and mortal. Or why...do they not betake themselves to Him again? For they are able, as they turned away their understanding from God and feigned as gods τὰ οὐκ ὄντα (40), in like manner to ascend with the intelligence of the soul (41), and turn back to God again. But turn back they can, if they lay aside

(39) οὐκ ἐφωθεν ἀλλ' ἐξ ἐαυτῆς λαμβάνουσα τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγου γνώσιν καὶ κατὰ φύσιν (40) What is not; this important stock phrase will be left untranslated in future.  
(41) τὴν τοῦ νοῦ ψυχὴν



the filth of all lust which they have put on, and wash it persistently, until they...can show it in its simplicity ( $\muόνην$ ) as it was made, that they may be able by it to contemplate the Logos of the Father, according to which they were also originally made. For the soul is made after the  $εἰκόνα$  of God and comes to be after the  $ὁμοίωσιν$  (42)...(quotes Gen.1:26)...Whence also when it gets rid of all the filth of sin which covers it and retains only the purity according to the image, then surely this latter being thoroughly brightened, the soul beholds as in a mirror the Image of the Father, the Logos, and in Him  $λογίζεταί$  (? - can bring the Father into reckoning - Auth.) the Father, Whose Image the Saviour also is. Or, if the soul's own teaching is insufficient, by reason of the external things which cloud its intelligence ( $νοῦν$ ) and prevent its seeing what is higher, yet it is further possible to attain to the knowledge ( $γνώσιν$ ) of God from the things which are seen ( $φαινομένῳ$ ), since Creation, as though in written characters declares in a loud voice, by its own order and harmony, its own Lord and Creator."

This treatment of the human soul is of great interest as being almost entirely Platonic, which should not be disguised by the fact that the main line of Christian thought has followed the same line. The soul is rational, in the ordinary philosophical meaning of the word (43) (see ch. 30, end; ch. 31, pass.; ch. 34, beg.); the fact that this is the meaning of the word  $λογικός$ , or at least a major portion of it, is confirmed by the handling of it in the preceding section, on idolatry, which has already been discussed. It

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{42} See footnote (9), p. 43 above.

{43} The soul is rational in the Platonic sense, by completely transcending the body and perhaps treating the body as its prison (cf. Plato "Phaedo", passim) rather than in the Aristotelian sense, whereby the soul is a sort of notion or form (i.e. of the bodily activities) not matter or substratum,  $λογος τις ὧν εἶναι καὶ εἶδος, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὅλη καὶ τὸ σπουδαίμενον$ . "De Anima", 414a, 12-13. On the other hand, with this exception, Athanasius's doctrine resembles that of Aristotle as well as Plato. See Zeller, "Aristotle and the Early Peripatetics" E.T. esp. Vol. II:92-94, and references to Aristotle's works there.



may be said that Athanasius is making no more than an apologetic pun, but his treatment of the matter is a little too strong for this interpretation, especially if we take the work as a whole, and besides, puns, metaphors and analogies do affect one's basic theology, a fact which nobody was more aware of than the later Athanasius. This rationality consists in the dominance of the soul over the body (ch. 31, esp. P.G.XXV 64A); and this is the essential characteristic of the soul for Plato, or rather perhaps the Platonic Socrates (Phaedo, 79, 80A, 94B); one aspect of this is that the soul forces the body to act against its sensuous and corporeal nature (ch. 32, P.G.XXV, 64C-65A and Plato, Phaedo, 80B-E). It is of particular interest to note here Plato's passage (Phaedo 80A) where souls are placed, along with the Platonic Ideas or Forms, above the dividing line separating higher from lower things, the latter including bodily sensations and sense; the soul <sup>like the</sup> (44) "divine and immortal and intellectual and uniform and indissoluble and unchangeable", the body on the other hand being like that which is "human and mortal and unintellectual and multiform and dissoluble and changeable" (45), (Jowett's translation). Athanasius does not call the soul divine, as Plato does, nor does he talk so much about the simplicity and non-compositeness of the soul, but the resemblance is pointed in other respects. The self-moving character of the soul, and its place as the source of the body's motion (chs. 31-33 passim) is reminiscent of the whole argument of the Phaedo and also of Phaedrus 245ff. and Laws 896-7; in the former passage (Phaedo 245ff.) there is a long and beautiful description of the soul "taking wings" from the body, (cf. ch. 33, P.G.XXV 65C-D). The soul in its relation to the body as the

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(44) θειῶν καὶ ἀθάνατων καὶ νοητῶν καὶ μονοειδέων καὶ ἀδιαλύτων καὶ ἀείων ὡς αὐτῶς ταῦτα ἔχοντι ἑαυτῶν ὁμοιωτάτων...

(45) ἀνθρωπίνων καὶ θνητῶν καὶ ἀνοητῶν καὶ πολυειδέων καὶ διαλυτῶν καὶ μηδέποτε κατὰ ταῦτα ἔχοντι ἑαυτῶν ὁμοιωτάτων...



player to the lyre, (ch. 31, P.G.XV 64A) corresponds to Socrates's reply to the objection of Simmias in the Phaedo (92A - 94E, esp. 94E); Simmias has maintained, against Socrates, that the soul is in the same relation to the body as a harmony is to the lyre, and thus is presumably dissolved with it, and in more general and modern terms, the soul is a quality of the body, Socrates replies that the soul's relationship is quite different, being substantially distinct from the body and transcending it. This passage is important because it suggests that for Athanasius the position of the soul in relation to the body was a sufficient sign of its otherness and transcendence compared with the body. As a corollary, even if Athanasius did think in terms of psychological analogy, i.e. the idea that the Logos is related to the material universe as the soul is to the body, that would be no justification for the charge that in his Logos doctrine, as it appears in the "Contra Gentes", Athanasius co-ordinates the Logos and the world, i.e. the material world as a totality, after the fashion of Hegel. The fact that Athanasius uses early Platonism safeguards the transcendence of the Logos over the world. This does not mean, however, that this whole way of thought is not vulnerable in other ways, and in other hands. The question, finally, of whether Athanasius did think in terms of the psychological analogy must be deferred until a later stage.

35 Proceeding on from the end of ch. 34, Athanasius continues with the Logos doctrine proper, and as is natural in this context the emphasis is almost entirely on the cosmological functions of the Logos. "For God,...since He is by nature invisible and incomprehensible (*ἀκατάληπτος*), having His being beyond all originate existence, for which reason the race of mankind was likely to miss the way to the knowledge of Him, since they are *ἐξ οὐκ οὐτῶν* (46) while He is

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(46) ex nihilo, out of nothing. This most important expression will normally be left untranslated.



ἀγενήτρον (47) - for this reason God by His own Logos has given the creation order, in order that...men might be enabled to know Him at any rate by His works..."

35-36 Here follows the analogy of the artist; although we can-  
37-38

not know the sculptor Phidias, we can know him by his artistic "creations" (the temptation to use this contemporary expression is irresistible - author). Then after quoting Rom.1:20 and Acts 14:15-17 in support of his case, Athanasius enunciates the classical Argument <sup>from</sup> of Design. In particular, he maintains that the universe consists (instances in astronomy, physics, meteorology, music, etc. supplied) of mutually opposing and self-cancelling forces, which can give rise to no harmony and even to no existent universe unless they are harmonised by a transcendent distinct Power. This is pure natural theology of the objective kind, in fact the physico-teleological argument, the Argument from Design, and it is subject to all the fallacies and weaknesses of this Argument (48). Here it is sufficient to note that, once again, as in chs. 3-4, it follows behind the soul's direct vision of God in order of treatment, and, according to the passage that we have quoted above at the end of ch. 34, Athanasius's own axiological judgement of these two ways of knowledge is the same, since this sort of objective natural theology is presented as a stop-gap in case the direct vision of the soul does not succeed.

38-39 In the latter half of ch. 38 and ch. 39, Athanasius repeats

(47) Another most important expression, meaning (in its gerundival form) "unoriginate". A fair rendering is usually "ultimate".

(48) The great scandal of the Darwinian theory of Evolution, was really that it undercut this argument by being a theory of how design arises by purely natural causes. A more philosophical criticism would be that if design is to prove the existence of God as the Designer, it must be perfectly general. But if it were so, there would be no means of distinguishing it, since there would be no absence of design. An approximation to this criticism (although it is part of Hume's general attack on the possibility of generalisation) is in Hume's "Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion", especially Section VIII.



his earlier arguments against dualism, that is, that only if the Ruler and Disposer of the Universe postulated by the above arguments is numerically one can there be, in fact, the absolute order that we observe; in addition, if one First Principle can itself be the ground of the Universe, another equal First Principle would be otiose (39:76C). If we ourselves treat the world as a unity, so must the Origin be treated: (39:77D) "...λόγου ὅντος φυσικοῦ (it being a law of physics) that what is one and complete is greater than things that are diverse" (49). The climax of the argument is expressed in the following sentence: (38:76C) "So then this order of its arrangement and the concordant harmony of all things shows that the Logos, its Ruler and Governor, is one and not many". Here the Logos, in spite of the capital letter in the Benedictine Text, is still patently the Logos of Greek philosophy. In spite of four references to the Father of the Logos, we have been on this level throughout the whole book, at any rate since the earliest chapters.

40 Up till now, we have been in the realm of pure natural theology, and in spite of a few references to the Father of the Logos (50)

(49) A perfect illustration of the Greek rational supreme valuation of unity. The best translation of τὰ φυσικά is actually Natural Philosophy in the old sense. The "Physics" of Aristotle is really a philosophical treatise on the origin and nature of Motion.

(50) The references to the Second Person as Logos during Chs. 1-39 are (Müller): 1. Logos called God in the same sense as the Father (some of these are rather strained in the context of "Contra Gentes"): 1:5B, 2:8A (L. is Image of the Father), 8:16D, 33:68B.

2. Origin of the Logos: L. of the Father &c.: 23:48A (also the Saviour of the Universe, Christ), 29:60B, 34:68C. L. of God: 1:5A (ἰδιος) 1:5E, 33:68A, 35:69B.

3. Logos at work with God in creation: Crn. διὰ τοῦ λόγου : 2:5C, 33:68A (see above 2). Creation πῶς λόγῳ (dative of instrument): 35:69B.

4. Man made according to the Logos as Image, &c.: 8:16D (see above 1), 34:68C (see above 2).

5. Same predicates as God the Creator applied to Logos (in context these are rather the deductions of objective natural theology - auth. 30:60C, 38:76C).

6. Jesus Christ the Logos made flesh: 1:5A.

7. Same Logos author of our reconciliation (&/or our ideal or supralapsarian state of grace - auth.): 1:5B, 2:5D & 8A.

There is no reference to the Second Person as Son at all, the references in ch. 1 &c. by other titles being Christ, Saviour, &c..

These appear to give the lie to the statement in the text, but both the lexicographical method and its limitation and also, apparently the theological interest of Fr. Müller exaggerates the uniformity of Athan-



there is not much that is distinctively Christian. At this stage, however, Athanasius affirms rather than argues that the Logos whose existence is proved by natural theology is the same as the Logos of Christian theology, the Second Person of the Trinity (51). The remaining eight chapters of the book deal with in part the material that has already been handled, but in the main the tone of these last chapters is more distinctively Christian; there is less emphasis on man's self-achieved knowledge of God, and more on God's grace to man. To begin at the beginning of ch. 40: "Who then might this Maker be? for this is a point most necessary to make plain, lest...a man should suppose the wrong maker, and fall once more into the same old godless error. But I think no one is really in doubt about it. For if our argument ( $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ ) has proved that the gods of the poets are no gods, and has convicted of error those who deify creation...&c...it strictly follows from the elimination of these that the true religion is with us...Who then is this, save the Father of Christ,...Who...by His own Wisdom and His own Logos, our Lord and Saviour Christ, steers and preserves and orders all things...For if the movement of the creation were irrational ( $\lambda\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ ),...one might fairly disbelieve what we say; but if it subsist in rea-

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(50) cont. -asius's theology throughout his life and also his precise verbal agreement with later orthodoxy, and minimise the effect of the context of the entire chapter or book upon the significance of the necessarily short extracts chosen. We have made cautionary comments even above, in this regard.

(51) Böhrringer, "Athanasius und Arius...", pp. 91ff., describes this transition as "ein Sprung, der völlig unberechtigt war" (p.95). He ascribes this to the influence of the Alexandrian and Philonic type of Logos tradition, and also to the uncertainty in Athanasius's mind as to whether creation was immediately by God, sc. the Father, or mediate through the Logos, a most troublesome point in the Arian Controversy. He continues, p. 98, "indem nur aber Athanasius auf die naivste Weise den hypostasirten Logos sofort wieder die eigenschaftliche Macht und Weisheit des Vaters substituirt, weiss er so den christlichen Monotheismus ganz leicht zu retten." We agree with this criticism, see also below p. 856-7.



son and wisdom and skill (52) and is perfectly ordered throughout, it follows that He that is over it and has ordered it is none other than the Logos of God (no def. art. in original)."

This proof by exhaustion and exclusion of the doctrine of God previously discussed is the nearest that Athanasius gets to arguing his point as distinct from merely affirming it. However, it appears at once to Athanasius that he has not yet properly excluded the idea that the Logos is the constitutive or integral sum of the world. This was in fact the *Λόγος σπερματικός* (53) of the Stoics, to take the most recent manifestation of this theory, and so Athanasius digresses to plug this leak at once; (continuing at once after previous citation, at 81A beg.) "But by Logos I mean, not that which is woven into and innate (54) in each originated thing, which some are wont to call *σπερματικόν*, which is *ἄψυχον*, and has no power of reason or thought (55), but works only by external skill (56) according to the knowledge (57) of him who applies it, nor such a logos as belongs to the rational genus, which consists of

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(52) *Εἰ δὲ λόγῳ καὶ σοφίᾳ καὶ ἐπιστήμῃ συνέστηκε.*

*Λόγος* and *σοφία* are the two Biblical as well as philosophical terms for what is here both the supreme activity of God and the Second Person, which Athanasius preserves throughout his theology. *ἐπιστήμη* is the Platonic term for that knowledge of the Forms which is the highest human activity; it would be the Platonic equivalent of the Logos as (human) rationality, which does not figure in Platonic vocabulary.

*συνέστηκε*: "subsist" as an English word in the present state of English vocabulary is quite unsatisfactory; "stand together" or "cohere" would be much better. All objective natural theology stresses the coherence of what apparently has of itself no reason to cohere.

(53) Seminal Logos, the technical Stoic term for the highest (unitary) reality. As a rule, this stock phrase will be untranslated.

(54) *συμπεπλεγμένον καὶ συμπεφυκότα*. The author has varied from Robertson to bring out the philosophical force of the Greek better.

(55) *μηδὲν λογισόμενον μήτε νοοῦντα*

(56) *τέχνη*

(57) *ἐπιστήμη*, here "know-how".



syllables and is expressed by means of the sir - but I mean the living and operative Logos Itself (58), which is God and which is of Him who is good and the God of the universe, Who while different from originate things and from all the creation, is the Sole Proper Logos of the good Father, Who by His own providence ordered and illumines this universe. For being the Good Logos of the good God He produced the order of all things...(Here follows a series of cosmological, astronomical and meteorological functions of the Logos of God, corresponding exactly to the functions postulated above, chs. 35-38)...And if a man were incredulously to ask... if there be a Logos of God at all, such a one would be mad to doubt concerning the Logos of God, but yet demonstration is possible from what is seen (59), because all things subsist by the Logos and Wisdom of God, nor could any originated thing have had a fixed existence had it not been made by logos, and that logos the Logos of God (60), as we have said."

It would appear from this account, at first sight, that it does not do full justice to the Stoic doctrine of the Logos, or even to that of Heraclitus. The latter's doctrine, the first Logos doctrine of which we have any knowledge, is plainly that the Logos is what all things have in common, and in the case of Stoicism, as indeed in that of Heraclitus, Athanasius does do full justice to the way in which the argument for the Logos turned on the interactions among things rather than anything interwoven with the things themselves. However, it is most interesting to notice the argument which Athanasius used, which is actually identical with the celebrated controversy in post-Hegelian idealism as to whether the Absolute was personal.

(58) Ἀὐτὸς Λόγος . (59) That is, in the sense of objective natural theology.

(60) Λόγος Θεοῦ καὶ Σοφία συνέστηκε , καὶ οὐκ ἐν ἡδράτῃ τι πῶν γενομένων , εἰ μὴ Λόγῳ ἐχέοντι καὶ Λόγῳ πῶ Θεῷ . Cf. above note (52). Here by contrast, we find Logos, etc., both as God's activity and God's (second) Person.

(61) See appendix p.



What Athanasius is saying in effect is that the Logos as conceived by the Stoics and other similar monists must be impersonal, and as such must actually be inferior to the least personal being. This question will be more fully discussed in our resumé later. While on this point, Athanasius introduced, for a phrase or so, the issue of our word or logos being composed of syllables and being hampered by a physical medium as a necessary condition for its expression. In the next chapter Athanasius returns to discuss this in greater detail.

41 "But though He is Word (Logos), He is not as we said, after the likeness of human words, composed of syllables (62); but He is the unchanging Image of His own Father. For men, composed of parts and made ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος, have their own Logos composite (συνκείμενον) (63) and divided (διαλυόμενον). But God possesses true existence and is not composite, wherefore His Logos also has

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(62) Of course, this was always a live issue ad homines. For example the Gnostic Marcus taught that the self-existent Father uttered the Logos, totalling 30 letters, the ideal Gnostic number, in four separate groups consisting successively of 4, 4, 10 and 12 letters. None of these four knows itself or its Utterer, or the whole Word of which it is part, but each is under the delusion that it is ultimate. Incidentally, Arius's statement that the Logos does not know His own generation from the Father is a striking echo of this sort of thing (see Thalia, apud De Syn. 15).

(63) The Greek desire for absolute simplicity in the Ultimate was greatly aided by their vocabulary. They did not have any word for complexity that did not introduce undesirable associations. This is shown by the words συνκείμενος, σύνθετος = synthetic, etc. These definitely suggest various pre-existent smaller parts which are put together to give rise to the complex or composite object, presumably by a pre-existent entity that transcended everything in question. The same thing would apply in Latin. One of the peculiarities, almost, of the present English language, with its academic vocabulary borrowed from different sources from its primary and humble roots, is that secondary meanings can take over a word without any interference from the primary etymology, which would be relatively obscure even to a Latin scholar, or at least would not be as vivid as the words on which he literally cut his teeth. Much of the difference between English (ie. the language group) and German philosophy, which comes out clearly to a reader of Hegel, is because German, to a much greater extent than English, retains the character of Latin and Greek (and Hebrew). It may be a positive advantage to English speakers as regards clarity of thought, but it leads to many difficulties of understanding. For the Uncompoundedness of God, see Origen, De Princ. I:6. "Simplex intellectualis natura"



true Existence and is not composite, but is the One and Only-Begotten God, Who proceeds in His goodness from the Father as from a good Fountain, and orders all things and holds them together." This is a difficult section in some ways. Prima facie, it is a reversion to the Philonic or Origenist concept of the Logos as primarily word rather than ultimate rationality, or even the Hebrew  $\logos$  concept (64). It is generally recognised that Athanasius was uncertain as to which meaning of Logos to follow. At first sight, it is not immediately obvious why something that proceeds from God must necessarily be absolutely singular in the sense postulated by Athanasius. After all, there is a sense in which God's creative acts proceed from God (65), and it is obvious that these must be regarded pluralistically rather than monistically, in the sense specified in this passage. The Arians were well aware of the confusion that results on this issue, and later in the controversy did everything in their power to exploit this ambiguity. This could only be resolved in terms of Athanasius's later clarification of the Logos which is Co-essential with the Father, and co-essential for reasons additional to those propounded by Athanasius here, even though this argument is still used throughout the controversy; at the same time, the distinction between God's begetting of the Logos and His Act or acts of creation would have to be drawn rigorously. In fact, we can see a beginning of the later doctrine in

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(64) See Appendix., p. Lauchert, "Die Lehre des heiligen Athanasius...", p. 45, admits that Athanasius is uncertain whether Logos = "word", or Logos = "rationality".

(65) The Eastern Orthodox doctrine of the Uncreated Divine Energies, which appear to be conceived as intermediate between pure acts of creation and the Persons of the Trinity, invite this sort of difficulty. See, for an Eastern exposition of the doctrine, e.g. Lossky, "The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church," ch. 4, and for a Western criticism, K. Barth, Ch. Dogm., Vol. II, Pt. I, pp. 331-2.



this passage. However, in some ways it is even more instructive to examine this question from the standpoint of the Logos as rationality. The argument would then run like this: As man is a creature and thus a composite being (to a Christian Hellenist like the Athanasius of the "Contra Gentes" these two concepts imply each other) his rationality, which really ought to be one, is nevertheless inevitably corrupted by multiplicity and compoundness (this statement cannot be gainsaid), and hence can only be expressed by words which are multiple and compound, and which have as their necessary conditions factors like the transmission of sound through the air that are far below the exalted level of rationality. This has nothing at all to do with the Logos of God. It is quite likely that Athanasius was thinking along these lines as well as on the more familiar and, for our generation, more obvious line in connection with Logos as simply word, and it is also likely that Athanasius's readers would have taken him, and would have been meant to take, him in this way. There are two things that we may observe in conclusion. Firstly, it is almost certain that this sort of argument actually precipitated the fall of such monistic Logos philosophies as Stoicism and their replacement by Neo-Platonism with its more rigorous separation between the Absolute or Logos and the world (66). Secondly, it is no accident that it is just at this point that Athanasius becomes more distinctively theological, and at once begins to discuss the great theological reality of the Incarnation and God's gracious purpose behind it, when he has been forcibly confronted with the creaturely nature of the very thing in man which it is so tempting to take as a spark of the divine, that is, his rationality. For the same reason, it is at this stage that the notion of the Father of the Logos, so incomprehensible on the basis of pure natural theology, begins to take over and increase in prominence. We are from now on

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(66) See above <sup>below</sup> p. 454-5.



definitely in the field of Biblical theology.

Thus Athanasius continues (810) at once, "But the reason (*διτία*) why the Logos, the Logos of God, has united Himself with things originated is truly wonderful, and teaches us that the present order of things is none otherwise than what is fitting. For the nature (*φύσις*) of originate things, inasmuch as it is brought into being *ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων*, is something fluid and feeble and of itself under sentence of death (67). But the God of all is good and exceedingly noble by nature. Therefore He is kind (*φιλάνθρωπος*)... and desires all things to exist as objects of His kindness. Seeing then all originate nature, as far as its own laws (*λόγους*) are concerned, to be fluid and subject to dissolution (*διαλυομένην*)... He made all things through His own Logos, and gave essential existence to (*οὐσιώδης* + acc.) creation, and moreover did not leave it to be tossed in a tempest in the course of its own nature, lest it should once more risk dropping out of existence, but because He is good, He guides and settles the whole creation by His own Logos which is Himself God, that by the governance and providence and ordering of the Logos, creation may have light and be enabled to abide securely, participating in the Logos which is actually from the Father..." (68).

Three things are worthy of attention here. First, Divine Love; as yet, the essential word for it is *φιλάνθρωπίᾳ* (69), which can only express God's relation to man, and cannot indicate the mutual love of Father and Son in the Spirit, let alone that God's love for men is essentially only a participation by man in this intra-Trinitarian love. This relative lack of feeling for the Divine Love

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(67) ῥεχέστη πὶς καὶ ζωθενῆς καὶ θνητῇ καθ' ἑαυτὴν συγκρινομένη. The Author has diverged from Robertson's translation.  
 (68) τοῦ ὄντως ὄντος ἐκ Πατρὸς λόγου μεταλαμβάνουσα  
 (69) See Clement of Alexandria, *Coh. ad Graec.* II, and *Paedagogus*, I:3.



in the proper sense is the inevitable concomitant of the rather one-sided Logos theology. Later, as the Son concept as applied to the Second Person comes into greater prominence under the influence of the Arian controversy, we shall find a greater emphasis on the divine intra-Trinitarian love, although in a rather different way from that in which we are usually accustomed to think of it. Secondly, Athanasius, in being confronted with the distinction between created reality and God, begins to elaborate a doctrine of the categorical distinctness of created reality from God, which is a rudimentary form of what was so brilliantly completed in C. P. II:18-72. Here it is stated that creatures are by nature changeable and do not have any permanence as regards their characteristics ( $\phi\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\tau\eta\varsigma$ ), that they come to be ex nihilo and in the ordinary course of events are subject to dissolution, that is, they are temporally limited at both ends. On the same point, their nature is weak, i.e. they are subject to external action. We can add to this, from the section on the difference between the Logos of God and the logos or logoi of man, that creatures are composite and are infected by plurality in a general way; also that they are really incapable of transcending other creatures, which is a justifiable inference from Athanasius's statements about air conduction being necessary for the human words, which is the test case for an ancient Greek thinker. Thirdly, to counteract this, and to save man from its effects, God has given man, and in fact in some way, the whole of creation, a supernatural grace; the contrast between this gift and the nature,  $\phi\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$ , the deficiencies and dangers of which necessitate the grace, compel us to accept the interpretation that it is really supernatural (70). The mode of appropriation of this grace is described by the Platonic metaphor of participation;

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(70) This is a point about which commentators disagree, but we shall have to postpone citations until the point comes up in "The Incarnation", ch. 3ff.



As this is the first appearance of this concept, it will have to be examined in full. Originally, it was used for the way in which particulars participate in the Platonic Forms or ideas, and it was meant to do two things, firstly, to justify the categorical and fundamental transcendence of the Forms over the particulars, and secondly to allow them, on this lower plane, a measure of reality over and against people like Parmenides who denied that they really existed at all. The basic verb is, if the process is considered dynamically, λαμβάνειν, to take or receive, or some similar verb; the corresponding stative verb would usually be ἔχειν, to have. But the important thing is that these verbs or other cognate parts of speech are always prefixed with μετα<sup>&</sup> = and thus, if verbs, govern the genitive case, and it is this linguistic element which expresses the subordination. The grammatical nominative subject of these verbs is the thing in subordinate relation, in Plato, the particular; the genitive is in superordinate relation; in Plato, the Form. Creation, in the last sentence here cited, is said to participate in the Logos (μεταλαμβάνειν + gen.).

42 Chapter 42 is substantially a repetition of the previous material on the cosmological functions of the Logos.

43 The next chapter, however, is much more interesting. It describes three most important analogies used by Athanasius for the relation between the Logos and the world, which are extremely important although they need not be quoted in detail. Firstly, there is the conductor in relation to the chorus and its members, secondly, the well-known psychological analogy, the soul in relation to the body; thirdly, a (monarchical) ruler of a city in relation to all the separate<sup>citizens, etc.</sup>. These are all particularly dangerous analogies, as Athanasius himself found out later. The first and the last are, in effect, pointedly criticised by Athanasius himself in his own hand-



ling of the *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως* later in the "Contra Arianos" (71); the second is a much more plausible, and for that reason, insidious analogy, which had had a venerable history in the very Plato whom we have already shown to be so patently Athanasius's favourite writer, among those of classical antiquity. We shall continue the question further in our general resumé and discussion of the "Contra Gentes". The author can find no definite case in the earlier Fathers of the use of such analogies, unless the whole of Clement of Alexandria's "Paedagogus" can be classified as such. The reason is quite clear when we consider the whole context of this chapter; the analogies all belong to the sphere of objective natural theology, and the reason for their apparent absence would be the same as the reason, whatever it is, for the relatively rudimentary state of the objective side of natural theology in the Patristic tradition anterior to the fourth century.

44-46 Chapter 44 is a repetition of the cosmological functions of the Logos; the bulk of ch. 45 and the early part of ch. 46 are a catena of Scriptural quotations that bear on the subject-matter of the book. (72) The beginning of ch. 45, which introduces the catena, is, appropriately for a Scriptural section, the clearest statement in the "Contra Gentes" of the place of God the Father, and the process of revelation that began with the world and has by natural theology reached the Logos is simply extrapolated to reach the Father. Unfortunately, neither here nor at any other place in the book is there any real theological ground for such an extrapolation: "For just as by looking up to the heavens and seeing its order and the light of the stars, it is possible to infer the Logos who ordered these things, so, by beholding (*ὁρῶν*) the Logos of God it is necessary also to behold God

(71) Col. 1:15, in which these words occur, was one of the key texts in the Arian controversy: its definitive treatment is in *Orat. II* 44-54.

(72) John, 14:9 on unity of Logos and Father. Ex. 20:4. Ps. 115:4-7. Deut. 4:19, Ex. 20:3. Deut. 6:4, 5, 13. on the unity of God and warning against idolatry. Ps. 119:90. Ps. 147:7-9. Ps. 148:5. Gen. 1:20 & 6-11, on God the creator (*non Verbum*).



His Father, proceeding (προϊών)(73) from whom He is rightly called the Father's Interpreter and Messenger. And this one may see from our own experience; for if when a word proceeds from men we infer the mind as its source, and by thinking about the word we see with our reason (λογισμῶ) the mind which it reveals, by far greater evidence and incomparably more, seeing the power of the Logos, we receive also a knowledge of the good Father...(John 14:9)...". There appears to be, if anything, a fusion of the two classical types of Logos doctrine, the Logos of Greek philosophy and natural theology, which would be the relevant meaning in the transition from the Cosmos to the Logos, and the other types of Logos doctrine, of Philo, probably Origen, and the Hebrew Logos concept as it is generally taken to be, which would primarily concern the transition from the Logos to the Father(74)Unfortunately, since Athanasius is writing apologetic at the heathen and not undertaking the much more severe test of defending sound doctrine against heresy, he never really shows that these two concepts refer to the same Being, beyond the chance verbal identity in the language which he used or, at the very best, the argument from exhaustion above, ch. 40.

Next follow the Scriptural quotations themselves, which are the traditional testimonies against idolatry, and for the doctrine of Creation per Verbum. Inevitably he comes to the "let us make", (πο.ῆσωμεν) in Gen. 1:26, and just as inevitably he takes this as a proof text of the Deity and Pre-existence and ~~the~~ Presence with God of the Logos. However, his argument is of great interest: (ch. 46, commencing at 93A middle) "By which God is shown to be speaking...to

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(73) This is remarkably reminiscent of the ἐκπνεύσασθαι which later became the technical term for the Holy Spirit with regard to the Father (at least). This is a striking instance of the Logos in taking over the functions of the Spirit, to be assimilated to the Spirit. See also Appendix pp.

(74) See Appendix pp.



someone at hand: it follows then that some one was with Him to Whom He spoke when He made all things. Who then could it be, save His Logos? For to whom could God be said to speak, save to His Logos? Or who was with Him when He made all created existence, except His Wisdom...(Prov. 8:27)...?...But being present with Him as His Wisdom and His Word, looking at the Father He fashioned the Universe...(John 5:19)...And the holy disciples teach that all things were made 'through Him and unto Him'..."

This is a most curious passage, which is *prime facie* binitarian. Apparently there is for Athanasius only one other to Whom "God" (i.e. God the Father) could speak before or during the creation of the world, the Logos or Second Person of the Trinity, and apparently the question of the Holy Spirit does not arise. Of course, this has always been a most difficult matter to deal with, and it is probable that the best solution would be that Athanasius was right after all. The argument would run that the word "Person" in Trinitarian theology cannot have the modern meaning of "person" and less still of "personality", and that it could mean at the most what Boethius meant when he defined *Personae* as "*Naturae rationabilis individua substantia*". Further, as far as the modern concept of personality is concerned, in one sense it would be the supreme attribute of the *Μία οὐσία* of God and in that sense equally common to all Three Persons, but in another sense would be shared by Father and Son and not by the Spirit (without any prejudice whatever to the Spirit's Deity!), simply in the sense that the Father and Son are Father and Son - personal words - and the Spirit is Spirit - a non-personal word. But the trouble is that this explanation cannot apply to the Athanasius of the "Contra Gentes", since his normal term for the Second Person is not Son, but Word, and if *πνεῦμα* is impersonal in the sense just described, so is *λόγος*, in exactly the same way. The author

cannot see offhand what explanation can be given that does not make confusion all the worse. Even if we consider that this whole dispute is anachronistic if applied to Athanasius, or that he was punning on ~~(call a poor pun)~~ with respect to speaking in the active and passive, the Word speaking and being spoken to, we should find it harder and not easier to acquit Athanasius of instinctively working with a conception of God which is essentially a Father-Son (or rather Father-Word) Binitarianism, in which the Spirit does not have a real place. (This has been recognised as an unfortunate characteristic of pre-Athanasian articulate theology; see Chaplain's Introduction to Athanasius's Letters to Serapion on the Holy Spirit, pp. 20 and 36, and Raven, Apollinarianism, p. 36).

Finally, Athanasius makes it clear that the Logos is on the Godward side of the line dividing Creator from creature. Once again the vocabulary used is the Platonic vocabulary of the relation between the ontologically superior Forms and the ontologically inferior particulars. We have already seen how Athanasius has used these concepts to describe the relationship of the creature to the Logos. We now see that it is this very process which Athanasius denies with reference to the relation of the Logos to the Father. We have already quoted above this important passage as apparently foreshadowing the later Arian controversy (75), without the exact concurrence of vocabulary that would suggest that it was directly prompted by the latter; here we note that the Logos has His characteristics  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{o}\kappa\alpha\tau\grave{\alpha}\mu\epsilon\tau\omicron\chi\eta\iota\nu$  (the noun form of  $\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\chi\epsilon\iota\nu$ ) - not according to participation, and that the Logos is described by seven abstract nouns all with the prefix  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron-$ , pointedly reminiscent of the standard description of a Form in the Platonic Socrates, e.g. "Justice," the Form, is  $\tau\omicron\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\nu\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron$ .



47 The final chapter is a conclusion and summary of the work, and here for the first time we find the suggestion made that our knowledge of God and participation in His grace is primarily God's act, not man's; it would be fair to say that this is a transition to the realm of the "De Incarnatione", which immediately follows: "Who then can reckon up the Father, so as to discover the powers of His Logos? For even as He is the Father's Logos and Wisdom, so too, condescending to originate things, He comes to impart the knowledge and apprehension of Him who begat Him, His Very Sanctification and Very Life, and Door and the Shepherd, and the Way, and the King and Ruler, and Saviour over all, and Light and Giver of Life, and Providence over all. Having then such a Son begotten of Himself, good, and Creator, the Father did not hide Him out of sight of the things originate, but even day by day reveals Him to all by means of the organisation (*οὐστὰς*) and life of all things, which is His work. But in and through Him He (sc. Father) reveals Himself also... (John 14:20)...so that it follows that the Logos is in Him that begat Him and that He that is begotten lives eternally with the Father". The chapter concludes with a final appeal to "recognise God", and to "worship His Logos".

This concludes our examination of the detailed contents of the "Contra Gentes", and it remains to examine the work in general ~~form~~ <sup>from</sup> in the main, the Trinitarian viewpoint. However, to analyse the Arian controversy at all without a study of the theological doctrine of God in relation to created reality is like performing Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark, although the most important aspects are those that are seldom treated in discussions of this question. Nor can we ever neglect the prolegomena to theology, including the importance of Scripture and tradition as sources of theology, in any dispute

that involves heresy (76); where it is the case of a Protestant and Reformed author on a subject where the main work has been done by those whose tradition disagrees with his own on this point, he has the double duty of facing this question honestly. With this type of issue we must group Christocentricity as the basis of all theology, since even a cursory glance will show that it determined the issue in the fourth century to an extent unique until Karl Barth, with the possible exception of the Reformation. This must be distinguished from Christology in the narrower sense, as the traditional locus theologicus, but this is a most important question, since we shall show later that it played a large part in bringing back the Holy Spirit as a subject of dogma. Finally, it is impossible to neglect the Atonement, since not only did Athanasius devote his second book to it but also had to return to it late in his life in the great exegetical sections of the "Contra Arianos" I-III (77), and the differences and resemblances between these two treatments are a most instructive commentary on the effect of the Arian controversy that intervened. Thus it is almost impossible to neglect any major section of Athanasius's theo-

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(76) See K. Barth, Ch. Dog. Vol. I. MI:26-38 for the proof that it is really heresy that imposes the necessity of dogmatic prolegomena. According to Barth, this meant that they were primarily associated with Reformation (and Counter-Reformation) Dogmatics. One of the things that we have to investigate is the way in which this is also true of the Arian controversy, even though the lack of the method of loci theologici has concealed it, even from Barth. On the other hand, as we shall see, later Roman Catholics are alive to this problem as manifested in the Arian controversy.

(77) I:37-III:58.



-logy, at any rate, the sections to which he gave more than incidental attention. Athanasius is the worst possible theologian to subdivide on the basis of the method of loci theologici. But our main problem shall be the Trinitarian doctrine itself, and also the Christocentric principle insofar as it concerns the very nature of the Arian heresy and the measures that had to be taken against it theologically. For that reason, we shall append a lexicographical analysis of the principal titles of the Second Person, Logos and Son, since a most significant issue is the relative importance of these two titles for the Second Person. We shall do the same with οὐσία, Essence and ὑπόστασις, hypostasis or Person, which later became the technical Trinitarian terms, and also the closely related φύσις, which later played a similar part in Christology. Here we shall follow the schemata of the "Lexicon Athanasianum", by Guido Müller, S. J. (1952).

The "Contra Gentes" has usually been regarded as a work of secondary importance and has usually received little attention, being normally hopelessly overshadowed by its immediate successor. This attitude is completely wrong for a student of the development and dynamic of Athanasius's theology. In this case, it is always vital to know the exact point from which the writer under started out. Therefore, what is generally recognised to be Athanasius's first book should receive great attention. There is another reason which may appear at first sight to militate against this consideration but actually supports it. The first book of a theologian, especially if written in his youth, will normally reflect not so much his own characteristic view as the tradition in which he was brought up, in the same way as in his early music Mozart was just another baroque composer, Beethoven wrote his earliest music in the style of Mozart and Haydn, Wagner in the style of Weber, and Schönberg in the post-Wagnerian romantic style, rather than according to their own mature



individuality. At any rate, all this becomes clear when succeeding generations have accumulated sufficient hindsight. What makes this so important in this case is that Athanasius wrote the "Contra Gentes" at the end of what is by general agreement the most obscure period in the history of theology and of the Church generally, the most poorly-documented and characterless period, at any rate after the condemnation of Paul of Samosata in 269, the period least supplied with great definitive literature. Nothing said here may take away the glory of the Church's endurance of the Diocletian persecution after 303, but even in this respect the previous thirty years were among the Church's quietest. The arrival of Athanasius on the scene was ~~almost, and in fact quite~~ contemporaneous with the onset of what is called the Arian Controversy but which would be even better called from the point of view of the Church's theology, the Arian Revolution. The question immediately and imperatively arises for a historian, and a fortiori for a theologian, to what extent was this change incubating during the previous generation or so? The "Contra Gentes" is an almost unrivalled source of evidence on this point, since it was written by a young man of great intelligence and organising ability, and for that reason is worthy of careful and detailed study. With all this in mind, we shall now summarise what we have said in the commentary on the book chapter by chapter.

There is very little of the Trinitarian doctrine in this book. The centre of interest is the Second Person purely and simply, considered as Logos. In and after ch. 40, there is reference to the Logos of the Father, and we have already noted the transition that takes place at just that point in the book, but the references to the Father of the Logos are quite formal in character. The Father is no more than that unknown X of which the Logos is Logos, now that the meaning of Logos in such traditions as the Philonic has been adopted.



On the other hand, there are references that show the Father to be the active agent, as for example *Creatio per Verbum*, and the Father's Love, which is *φιλανθρωπία*, Love ad extra, also mediated through the Logos. But there is nothing about even this as a projection of the love of Father and Son; how could there be? A father can love His Son, but it is a very egocentric father who loves his word. The intra-Trinitarian love really needs the Son theology of the Second Person (78). As one would expect, to return to the matter in hand, the Logos as the active agent and the Father as the active agent are not well integrated. To must except from all these remarks the first chapter, which is in a sense introductory to the "Contra Gentes" and the "De Incarnatione" as a whole, but with this exception, the position of the first 39 chapters is a virtually complete Logo-monism, according to both the subjective and objective natural theology, and the sections in the last eight chapters in which the subject-matter of the earlier part of the work is repeated, are similar. The reason for all this is patently an attempt to reconcile natural or philosophical theology and the essentials of the Christian Faith. In order to do this, he makes an almost imperceptible but actually very real transition from the tradition in which Logos meant rationality to that in which Logos meant word. Meanwhile, it is not surprising that there are in effect no references at all to the Holy Spirit; the Spirit is mentioned in 7:16B and 14:30B, purely as the Inspired Utterer of Ecclesiastes 7:29 and Is 44:10-20 LXX respectively. Each of these citations is from the Old Testament, and each refers to God's knowledge and foreknowledge of human sin. They represent an almost microscopic fraction of the Scriptural quotations of the book, and the best that can be said is

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(78) Presented supremely by Augustine, *De Trin.* XV : 19, 37.

that it is a vestigium of the Prophetic Witness of the Spirit so important in Irenaeus (79). The instances of the use of the word Logos referring to the Second Person of the Trinity in chs. 40-47 are (Müller):

Logos called God in the same sense as the Father (or more correctly called God - auth.): 41:84A, 42:84C (refce. simply to God the Logos), 44:88A.

Origin of the Logos:  $\Lambda$ . τοῦ Πατρὸς : 40:81A bis, 42:84A, 47:93C.

$\Lambda$ . τοῦ Θεοῦ : 40:80D-81A, 40:81B ter, 41:81C bis, 41:84A bis, 43:88A, 44:88C bis, 45:89A, 46:92B, 93A, 93B (+ σοφία, κ.τ.λ.), 47:96B.

Logos as Divine Envoy (C.T. sense): 45:89B, 46:93A, (ref, to Gen. 1:26).

Logos's perfect and unchanging equality to Father: 46:93A (ref. to Jo. 14:10).

Work of Logos in creation: διὰ τοῦ λόγου ; 47 bis.  
 $\pi$ ῶ λόγῳ ; 40:81B bis,  
 41:84A.

Logos διακοσμεῖ : 40:80D & 81A, 43:88A, 44:88C, 45:89A.  
 ἐπιβλίνει : 42:84B.  
 ἐπιστάτει : 44:88A.  
 ἡγεμονεύει : 44:88A.  
 κινεῖ : 44:88C bis.  
 συνέχει : 44:88C bis.  
 τηρεῖ : 42:84C.

All types of reference to the Logos are far more numerous than in the rest of the book. By contrast there are only three references to the Second Person as Son, all at the very end: 46:93B (ἀληθινὸς υἱός) and C (+ ἀπαράλλακτος εἰκὼν - undistorted image), 47:93C

(79) Irenaeus has never been given sufficient credit for his doctrine of the Spirit, it being usually dismissed as being simply a doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture. On the contrary, it is essentially concerned with the whole witness to Christ in its continuity between the forward-pointing witness of the Old Testament and the witness of the New Testament and the Church. See appx. pp. . It is not his fault that the Doctrine of the Spirit came to be so neglected by Athanasius's youth.



(ὁ λόγος καὶ θεοῦ γόν υἱόν).

This shows that we are still in the sphere in which the definitive term for the Second Person is Logos. It is the received opinion that this is a characteristic of the Origenist tradition of theology, and that the Arian controversy, on both sides, turned away from this tradition to the Son as the definitive title. As an extreme summary of this opinion, see T. E. Pollard, "Logos and Son in Origen, Arius and Athanasius" (80) and see also Swatkin, "Studies in Arianism", p. 45, and Harnack (who will be evaluated later). Apparent evidence for this is the Letter of Eusebius of Caesarea to his Church (81), in which it appears that the creed presented by Eusebius at Nicaea refers to the Second Person primarily as Logos, and then as Son only after the titles "God from God, light from light, Life from Life", in contrast to the creed finally adopted, where the Second Person is described as Son without reference to Logos. As we shall show during the whole of this thesis, it is not correct to say that the Son theology replaced the Logos theology in Athanasius, the truth being rather that it did no more than reach an equilibrium with the Logos theology. In a different way, it is not true either to say that for the Arians the primary notion was "Son", as we shall show later (82). And again, whatever the position of Origen or Eusebius of Caesarea the credal theologian was, whatever even may be the case with "De Incarnatione", the tremendous emphasis on the Logos in this first book of Athanasius is associated with the strong tradition of natural theology which was relatively subordinate in Origen. More likely than not, this is also the reason for the lack of subordination of the Logos compared

(80) Paper presented at the 1955 Patristic Conference, Oxford, published in English, in "Texte und Untersuchungen", Vol. LXIV, 1957, pp. 282-288. It is a summary of his unpublished doctoral thesis at the University of St. Andrews.

(81) apud Theodoret H.E. I:12:1. See also E.H. I:8:55. Appendix to Athanasius "De Decretis". See Opitz, "Urkunde...", No. 22.

(82) See below p. 430-436.



with the usually recognised position of Origen; a natural theology is inevitably logocentric.

Next, there are the words *ὑπόστασις* and *οὐσία*, which later became the termini technici of the Trinity. (Cf. for what follows, Prestige, "God in Patristic Thought", chs. VIII and IX). The Origenist usage in the East before Athanasius appeared to be *τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις* and *μία οὐσία* (83). One difficulty is that the former was the exact equivalent of the Latin substantia in Tertullian's classical formula, una substantia, tres personae; it means everything that we mean by "substance" (84). *Οὐσία* on the other hand could be either the *πρώτη οὐσία* of Aristotle, i.e. an individual personal entity, or the *δευτέρα οὐσία*, or essence in the more qualitative sense (85). There was, however, no great tendency to speak of Three *οὐσίαι*, although, as the condemnation of Paul of Samosata shows, there was an undoubted difficulty felt here (86). On the other hand, there is almost nothing about the Trinitarian uses in this book; in a way this makes it more valuable. There are only three uses of *ὑπόστασις* in the whole "Contre Gentes", 6:12D & 13A bis, all of which refer to the question of evil having or rather according to Athanasius, not having, a substantive existence of its own; *οὐσία* or one of its derivatives can just as well be used, and was actually used as a parallel. *Οὐσία* is much commoner (Müller):

= one of the four elements, 9:17D, 15:33B, 27:53B & 53A.

The four elements are *ἀρχαὶ πάσης αἰσθητῆς οὐσίας* (i.e. sensory reality): 42:84C.

God transcends all(originate) *οὐσία* (intelligible reality): 2:5C, 35:69A, 40:80C.

*Οὐσία* (parl. with *ὑπόστασις*) of sin repudiated: 6:13A, 7:16A.

= *δευτέρα οὐσία* (stone, water, wood, etc.): 20:41A, 26:53C.

God created all originate essence (*οὐσίαν*): 46:93A.

*οὐσιώω* = create = give reality to, 41:84A

Patently here *οὐσία* means, in the most general sense, every-

(83) See Athanasius "Tomus ad Antiochenos", ch. 6.

(84) Especially elaborated in "Adversus Praxean".

(85) See "Metaphysics", Book Z (7) for Aristotle's doctrine of Substance (*οὐσία*).

(86) This will be fully discussed below pp. 361-366.



-thing that has reality, including certainly *δευτέρα οὐσία* and probably *πρώτη οὐσία*

What we have said about *οὐσία* applies even more to the later Christological term *φύσις*. It is extremely common in this book:

Divine Nature: God has attributes *φύσει* or *τὴν φύσιν*, respectively dative and accusative of respect: 29:57B, 35:69C, 41:81B.  
*φύσις* qualified by attribute as adjective: 35:69B bis.

N. of heathen gods: 9:21A (*φύσιν*, acc. of respect), 12:25D (simple use).

N. of men: 16:36, 17:37 bis, 27:58A (in all cases simple use)

N. of created world and/or parts: 28:57A, 41:81C & 84A (Simple use), 41:84A (dat. of resp.), 6:13A (nature of goodness), 7:16A (excludes *τὸ τρίτον τῆς φύσεως* between good and evil), 20:41A (nature of living things, which = *φύσει ζῶν*).

N. of elements: 27:52C (*τοῦ ὑγροῦ τὴν φύσιν* = the nature of the moist principle).

Principle whereby things naturally conflict (either "conflicting nature" or "conflicting in respect to nature"): 29:60, 36:72A & B & C, 37:73 A bis & E.

Other uses: 9:20B (men make idols out of things unlike in nature).

13:29A (idols disappear *διὰ τὴν φύσιν*).

13:29A (men rational and ensouled *κατὰ φύσιν*).

19:40A *πάντα τῶν ὑδάτων ἡ φύσις* = the aquatic realm, as home of life.

19:40A (irrational creatures are so *τὴν φύσιν*)

42:85B (elements accdg. to own nature)

42:85B (all things as they have *φύσεως*)

"Nature" in modern colloquial monistic sense: 10:21D, 28:57A 31:61B, 10:21D (*οὐ κατὰ φύσιν*)

As model of artificial activity: 16:37B bis, 20:41B

27:56A, (n. of bodies)

26:52A bis - natural sexual behaviour and its opposite.

This shows that Athanasius's use of the word *φύσις* was just our use of the word "nature" and "natural", etc., in our modern scientific sense, or pseudo-scientific sense. It would be the natural use to one who knew Aristotle. The important thing to remember as regards

the derivation of the word is not at all obvious here yet. Like all words, literary or otherwise, derived from the Indo-European root  $\phi\upsilon-$  its primary reference is to the process of generation or origination.

Thus it refers to the aboriginal state of the being in question, as distinct from what happened to it later; in Aristotle it refers to activities or motions in the body that were there without action from external forces, as distinct from its behaviour under the influence of an external force. The author is quite certain that when St. Paul writes against "the natural ( $\phi\upsilonσικὸς$ ) man", he simply means "man as he is without the work of Christ", and therefore, "unconverted man".

These considerations, if anything, show themselves much more strongly in the later writings of Athanasius, that is, Christ is "by nature" God, and to speak of His human "nature" is heretical, since He did not have it till the Incarnation. Again,  $\sigma\upsilonβί\alpha$  could be substituted without difficulty where the reference is to God. It took a long time before the Council of Chalcedon, needing an expression for the complete Humanity of Christ, accepted "nature" in a derived but familiar sense, and saw its way clear to speak of the Human Nature of Christ as well as the Deity which was His only Nature on the original meaning of this word.

In the above paragraphs, we have answered the questions concerning the nature of our knowledge of the Trinitarian doctrine, such as it is, and its positive representation, such as it is. As far as the rest of the doctrine is concerned, there is (apart from ch. 1 and a perceptible transition towards it in ch. 47 - no more) no reference to the Incarnation, and therefore no Atonement in the usual sense, and no Christology in the usual sense. Christocentrism in its wider and more fundamental sense has its place taken by the rational Logomonism of natural theology. Sin and evil are treated Platonically as the turning of the soul to lower realities which have no existence which makes



them worthy of such attention (87). The strongest part of such a doctrine is that evil, as Athanasius says, has no independent or substantive existence, and its cause, insofar as one can speak of any, is in the will and activity of man (88); this is a constant factor throughout Athanasian theology. On the other hand, this, and particularly the sense in which evil is non-existent, is the most intractable problem in theology, and one out of which the author asks leave to contract. We have already noticed how for Athanasius the quintessence of evil was idolatry, and the lust so commonly associated with it, rather than, say, pride, and that idolatry is, prima facie, the worship of fictitious entities. Correspondingly, the equivalent of the Atonement is the soul's practice of natural theology which, except for the trend initiated at the very end of the book, is presented as something which the soul can apparently do unaided, with its own purity as the only really necessary condition (89). Both of the great types of natural theology are presented, the subjective and objective, and together with these the corresponding ontological assertions about the nature of reality are made. According to the former method, the soul, by reason of its very nature, is able to see and know the Logos, which is due to a fundamental affinity, as if the soul was a spark from the Divine fire (90). But, as we have shown in the section on the soul and especially on our comparison between it and the Platonic Socrates Athanasius treated the soul as having attributes that were, to say the

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{87} See above, chs. 3 - 4.

{88} See above, chs. 5 - 7.

{89} See above, ch. 54.

{90} Voigt, "Die Lehre des Athanasius von Alexandrien...", p.3, exaggerates when he says, "Die Möglichkeit der Erkenntnis des göttlichen Wesens ist nach Athanasius von einer metaphysischen Voraussetzung abhängig, nämlich von der Wesensgleichheit mit Gott". Athanasius apparently intends this, but does not go as far as to accept all its implications. Voigt rightly points out in the following pages that the consequence of this later is that, for Athanasius, only the Son can know the Father (Matt.11:27). The consequent problem of the human knowledge of the Father thence arises, and as we shall show, finally has to be solved in terms of the Holy Spirit. But Athanasius is not at this stage yet, and the question is still essentially obscure. It took the Arian controversy to force a solution.



least, more than analogous to those of the Logos Itself, and actually uses the psychological analogy for the relation of the Logos to the cosmos. Even more important, the soul is presented as being virtually constituted by its rationality. This is straight after the long section on idolatry, wherein the characteristic of the idolatrous way of life is its irrationality. Thus it is plain that Athanasius regarded somatic man as a microcosm of the universe, the universe as a macrocosm of the body, and correspondingly, if one is permitted to invent a word, the soul is a micrologue of the Logos and the Logos is a macrologue of the soul. The only respect in which Athanasius shows caution is that, in contradistinction to Plato, he does not refer to the soul as divine.

Corresponding to this, there is the objective type of natural theology, according to which the soul is capable of deducing the existence of God from the rationality and order of the world. This corresponds to the physico-teleological argument, or the Argument from Design. It is presented as the second best alternative to the subjective natural theology, or the direct vision by the soul of God. This is the classical presentation of this argument in every way, from Aristotle to Aquinas and beyond, and is one of the few aspects of Athanasius's thought in which he depends on a philosopher other than Plato (91). Both strands

(91) For the importance of the objective natural theology, especially the physico-teleological argument, see Voigt, op. cit. p. 20 f.

Atzberger, "Die Logoslehre des heiligen Athanasius...", p. 38 ff., discusses the relative importance of the objective and the subjective natural theology. He concludes that the idea of God is innate and immediately perceived by the soul, but the existence is mediately proved for Athanasius by the objective natural theology; on the other hand, he maintains that the sharp differentiation is not important for Athanasius. This does not do justice to the supremacy of the soul's natural vision of God. The difficulty is that Atzberger, as a Roman Catholic priest, wrote this in many ways excellent book the year after the Vatican had proclaimed the special status of Thomas Aquinas. His statement, op. cit. p. 34, that "Sie (sc. the Alexandrian school of theology, and Athanasius following) sucht den Glauben intuitiv zu erfassen, und (in that sense - Author) steht aber hinsichtlich der Art und Weise der Glaubenserkenntnis auf dem Standpunkt des Platonismus", while also not the whole truth, is much nearer the mark here.



of natural theology are brought together and culminate in ch. 43, in the psychological analogy and the other two analogies mentioned in this chapter. The psychological analogy has had a long history in

(91) cont. - The classification of natural theology into objective and subjective is the one that does most justice to the subject. The classical three theistic proofs are the ontological, classically presented in Anselm, "Proslogion" 2-4, according to which God, as being in notion the Being than which none greater can be conceived, must exist, because otherwise there would be a greater Being. The author feels (cf. K. Barth, "Fides quaerens intellectum", and McIntyre, "St. Anselm and his Critics", p. 8 ff.) that the Anselmic form of the ontological argument is really akin to what he has called in the context of Athanasius the subjective natural theology, and that its real force is that if the soul speculates on or plays round with an idea of God, it commits itself to worshipping and obeying this God, which is the existential equivalent of recognising that God exists. Aquinas's rejection of the ontological argument in this form, which he describes as a rejection of the idea that God is self-evident ("Summa Theologica" Pt. I, Quest. II, Art. 1,) is really a demand that the proof be something objective and in that sense really universal; it is a call for objective natural theology. The other two proofs are really from the objective field; the cosmological proof argues from the fact that all reality is contingent and incomplete to the existence of a complete Reality (i.e. Aquinas's third proof); the physico-theological is the argument from Design, that is to the Divine Designer (Aquinas's Fifth Proof). Thomas Aquinas ("Summa Theologiae", Pt. I, Quest. II, Art. 3) adds three more to these, but they are really an extension of the general line of reasoning in the two above; the argument for God as the Origin of Motion (the first argument), the argument to the Ultimate Cause (second, perhaps variant of the Cosmological Argument), and the argument to Perfections from Comparisons (fourth, perhaps also a variant of the Cosmological Argument). The arguments of Aquinas are almost identical with Aristotle's. See *Metaphysics*, Book A (12).

Kant's criticism of the Theistic Proofs is based on an attempt to take the Ontological Argument as an objective argument in the same way as the others are. (See "Critique of Pure Reason", Book II, Ch. III, Sects. 3-6). His argument is that the ontological argument is a sophism, since existence is not a predicate in the same way as God's other perfections are, that the Cosmological argument formally depends on the Ontological argument, since it would not prove anything unless the sort of argumentation presupposed in the Ontological was true, and for the same reason the Physico-theological argument presupposes the Cosmological Argument; therefore all the arguments collapse. It is interesting to note that Sorley, "Moral Values and the Idea of God", Lect. 12, takes the dialectically antithetical line, pointing out that the Ontological Argument, as regards its real content, is meaningless except in terms of the Cosmological Argument, which is itself meaningless except in terms of the Physico-theological Argument. Both Kant and Sorley agree that the Theistic Proofs collapse, leaving the Moral Argument as the only possibility. This is not necessarily so. The philosophy of Hegel represents a higher synthesis of both these positions. When he is said to have revived the Ontological Argument, what is really revived is a sort of Perichoresis of all three arguments along the above lines, with the Ontological Argument no longer isolated and subjective, as the key-stone which clinches the perfect generality of the God (?) of natural theology. On the other hand, we can see clearly in Athanasius (where



philosophy, even though it appears to be the first use of it in the Fathers. It was a particular favourite of Plato. In the "Timaeo" the question of the world and even what we have called above the macrocosm does not arise, as the highest forms of unity are the Forms, with which the souls are analogous, but it is sufficient that in the Platonic Socrates' catalogue of the properties of souls and the opposed properties of bodies, the soul is described as "divine", and the other properties of the soul are precisely those of simplicity, uncomposition, indissolubility and constancy, as well as transcendence over sensory reality that are the hallmarks of God and specifically the Logos, to none more than to Athanasius. In the "Republic", with its more monistic tendency, the psychological analogy is at its very basis (92), and it is again specifically drawn in "Laws" (897). Now as we shall explain later, these analogies are mortally dangerous if misused. Once it is understood that the soul is a creature in exactly the same way as the body (93), the result of using the psychological analogies without proper awareness of its limitation would be pure Arianism, and the same would apply to the other two. And the damage does not stop here. To a Platonist, a thing is real in virtue of its participation in the (more general) Form in which it participates. There-

(91) cont. - all these objective arguments are present) far more clearly than in Hegel, that the everyday content of such a system <sup>must</sup> be the Physico-teleological Argument.

(92) Book II:368, where the transition is made from the consideration of justice in the man to justice in the State, for the purpose of seeing on a large scale what justice is. The fact that this takes about 75% of the "Republic" does not alter the fact that it is really a digression. Of course, the State is not the universe, least of all the City that Plato treated, but it is the biggest macrocosm that Plato considered.

(93) See Demetropoulos, "Anthropology of St. Athanasius" (in Greek) p. 33-4, with references for a discussion of Athanasius's view in this connection. The place that Athanasius gives to Trinitarianism is emphasised, but for Athanasius, creationism is part of the truth. Even in the former case, the soul would be completely a creature.



fore a soul is rational in virtue of its rationality, which could easily be assumed to be identified with the Logos itself. Therefore if the Incarnate Christ is considered to have a rational soul as well as the Logos, such a soul would be meaningless, superfluous and otiose, on the basis of this line of thought. This would lead directly to the Apollinarian heresy, that the humanity of Christ lacked a rational soul, and possibly contribute to the difficulties leading to the other Christological heresies of the fifth century, Eutychianism and Nestorianism. All in all, this psychological analogy is a most dangerous source of trouble.

The conclusion of all this is that Athanasius accepted this natural theology to an extent which contained the seeds of later strife. But against this must be set the following extenuating circumstances. First and foremost, the "Contra Gentes" can almost certainly be considered as only half the truth, subject to amplification and correction by the "De Incarnatione" that immediately followed it. Secondly, a major caution must be sounded concerning the traditional Philippics against Platonism. It is usually associated with intellectualism, but it is possible that the intellectualism may be at least as much in the mind of his Western interpreters as in Plato himself or his Greek successors. The author feels that there may be a strong emotional or even erotic element in Plato and Platonism that the practical, Romanized Westerners have consistently missed. It is probable that when Plato and his Platonist successors, including Athanasius, spoke of the virtues of the contemplation (*θεωρία*) of God and divine things, and the evils of contemplation of the things of this world, they meant, not primarily the intellectual activity that most of us tend to have in mind, but rather that idolatry consists in entering into that emotional relation, even analogous to eroticism, with the things of this world, which should be reserved for God alone. The author has been informed that no really adequate study of Platonism



(94) The tendency to criticize this part of Athanasian doctrine on the grounds of Platonism is far more marked among Roman Catholic scholars than among Protestants; at any rate this is true since 1879. Atzberger, op. cit. 189; "Andererseits ist aber auch seine Darstellung des höhern Leben des Menschen zu platonisch gefärbt. Sein Schauen des Göttlichen und Erfassen des Geistigen und Himmlischen erinnert zu sehr an das platonische Schauen der Ideen. (Footnote: ὁῶν, κατὰ τὴν κατανόησιν, κατὰληψιν, φαντασίᾳ περὶ Θεὸν, θεωρίᾳ τῶν θείων κτλ. also ἔννοια τοῦ Θεοῦ, κτλ.) Es hat diese Anwendung platonischer Begriffe auf die christliche Lehre einen doppelten Mangel zur Folge. Fürs Erste begegnet uns bei ihm ein fühlbarer Mangel an Ausscheidung zwischen natürlichen und Übernatürlichen Gaben des Menschen...(er)...faßt beides zusammen auf unter der (platonischen) Idee des Guten. Da er aber doch bald mehr das Natürliche, bald mehr das Übernatürliche im Menschen hervorheben mußte, so lief er beständig Gefahr, dass Eine auf Kosten des Andern zu betonen, weil er eben für keines von beiden einen abgrenzten Begriff und einen bestimmten Ausdruck hatte.

Sträter, "Die Erlösungslehre des heiligen Athanasius", 22-23 and f., supports this criticism, and, perhaps unjustly specially incriminates the doctrine of Participation, which he describes as one-sided, liable to misunderstanding, indefinite, and in particular, naturalistic. We have already pointed out (see above p. 55) that there are elements in the Platonic doctrine of participation that, if used properly, safeguard the categorical transcendence of God, and shall return to this at the end of the thesis. Sträter later, p. 28, associates the errors of this Platonic doctrine with the apparent Athanasian position that the soul can directly see God.

See also Hoss, op.cit. 34-9, for a summary of Athanasius's philosophical knowledge. He finds quite correctly an intimate knowledge of Plato, but a not so intimate knowledge of other traditions. John Macmurray, "The Clue to History", is one of the few writers who is prepared to do justice to the part played by emotion in Platonism and in the classical Greek tradition generally, even when he criticises the tradition severely. In spite of the dated form of his apocalyptic and his somewhat unorthodox point of view, the book is in many ways quite valuable. See pp. 22-25, where the powerful emotional attachment of the Greek to small units of society and friendship is emphasised, and p.153, where it is pointed out that this feature of the Greek tradition led to a far greater emphasis on emotion, in a developed form as distinct from what Westerners take to be its inevitable crudity, in Eastern Orthodoxy.



The third attenuating factor is that in spite of everything Athanasius cannot escape being confronted with the supreme distinction between God and the creaturely world. We have already seen how, when he is in danger of too simply equating the rationality of the soul with ~~the~~ rationality of Logos which is God, he is reminded of the broken and creaturely character of the rationality of man, and thus of the fundamental difference between God and creatures, even rational man (95). From here on, increasingly, we see the more truly incarnational and gracious type of theology coming to the surface, and also the other type of Logos doctrine, the Logos as the Logos, or rather the Son, of the Father.

However, the most interesting thing about the "Contra Gentes" remains that, in spite of all the qualifications that we have just made, it is one of the classical expositions of natural theology in all history, and is abnormally firmly and tightly constructed. This, in the first work even of the most intelligent young man, suggests that there was some sort of tradition of natural theology in that part of the world, especially at the Catechetical School of Alexandria. The tradition may have grown up during the previous half-century, or it might have been suddenly stimulated by ending of persecution and the arrival of the Constantinian age. The great peculiarity is the emphasis on what we have called the objective type of natural theology, to which there is nothing exactly corresponding in the earlier Fathers (96). Justin and the other Apologists emphasise the work of the Logos in creation and in the illumination of the souls of wise and rational men, like Socrates, while such

(95) See above, chs. 40 and 41.

(96) In addition to the Fathers mentioned here, Origen argued from the unity of the cosmos to that of the Logos. C. Cels. I:23, and emphasised that God is revealed in His works, De Princip. I:5-6, but these are minor and indefinite references compared with the natural theology of the "Contra Gentes".



writers as Clement of Alexandria were interested in the intellectual, ethical and ?-emotional direction of the "True Gnostic" by the Logos. It is impossible to be sure of why there was nothing quite like the objective natural theology, or even the lucidity and assurance with which the subjective natural theology is here expressed in the earlier Fathers. Perhaps it was actually because those were the days when nobody could expect to be free of persecution or of the pressure of pagan mores, and this would always be associated with witness before the tribunal or the Circus Maximus, or a defence of the eccentrically high ethical standards of Christians, or, in the case of Origen against Celsus, the rebuttal of the ancient equivalent of the charge of Nietzsche that Christianity, as shown in the life of Christ, is a slave-religion. Whatever the truth may be, and one can at the moment only speculate (another topic that requires further study), it must be accepted as a brute fact that the full development of objective natural theology seems to have been a peculiarity of the early fourth century in its Christian context, in spite of its extra-Christian flowering in perhaps Heraclitus, and certainly Aristotelic and Stoicism. (97)

The only good parallel that we have to the "Contra Gentes" in this regard is the "De Theophanía" of Eusebius of Caesarea, probably written after 325, perhaps 331-33. It is interesting in that the parallelism is to the "Contra Gentes" and "De Incarnatione" combined, and, with the relative confusion and lack of organisation of Eusebius's mind, the parallels to both of Athanasius's books are fairly intimately mixed with each other. Book I of the "De Theophanía" is a complete cosmology or objective natural theology, Book II, to ch. 32, is a critique of idolatry and non-Christian philosophy, corresponding to "Contra Gentes" 5-19; the remainder shows that the Logos was right



to save a man in spite of lesser warnings and exemplary penalties for sin - cf. "De Incarnatione" 4-17. Book III is on Jesus Christ; chs. 1-38 concern the effects of Christ's work on the world - cf. "De Incarnatione" 46-55; 39-40, the Image and Revelation of God, 41-60, on the Death of Christ - cf. "De Incarnatione" 21-25; 61-80, the effect of Christ's work on men - cf. "De Incarnatione" 27-31, the transcendental proof of the Resurrection. Book IV is an account of the Synoptic Jesus, and Book V on material reminiscent rather of Origen "C. Celsus". We have already had occasion to touch on the question of the literary dependence of the one on the other. Apart from the fact that the relative disorder of the "De Theophania" throws into sharper relief the superb organising ability of Athanasius, the only firm conclusion is that they were both probably drawing on a common apologetic tradition. If anything, the "De Theophania" is related to the "De Incarnatione" as the Synoptic Jesus is related to the Pauline Christ (or Pauline and Johannine Christ). In any case, the example of Eusebius shows that the tradition of objective natural theology was generally developed, that it was already mingled with a tradition of apologetic concerning the Incarnation, and with Eusebius as a much older man it suggests that in some form this tradition goes back about half a century but no further as a mature and independent element, however implicit it might have been in the older apologetic and Logos doctrine.

It is most important to understand this, because for every Athanasius who would employ this natural theology and just manage to avoid its pitfalls there would be thousands who would walk right into them; for instance they might misuse the psychological analogy in the way that has been suggested above, or they might fall for the dangerous correlation between the Logos and the world and hence render themselves acutely vulnerable to Arianism in the same way that theological liberalism and Hegelianism were vulnerable to Feuerbach, Marx,



Freud, etc. If our conclusions from our study of the "De Theophanía" are correct, they would allow for a development of the tradition sufficiently early for Arianism at its outset to be a militant reaction to it.

In conclusion, there are two incidental but important points that need to be cleared up. In the first place, we have this Logocentric tradition of natural theology which neglects the Spirit, and which is connected with the apologetic for the Incarnation; in the "De Incarnatione", there is not even the very modest attention to the Spirit that there is in the "Contra Gentes". On the other hand, there is, side by side with this, a clear tradition that was Trinitarian in the strictest sense, which we find not only in isolated passages in theologians like Justin, but in works that are definitely Trinitarian in form, like the "Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching" of Irenaeus, "De Trinitate" of Novatian, and "De Principiis" of Origen. There is also the "Adversus Praxean" of Tertullian, the earliest classical presentation of Trinitarianism. Athanasius's selection of the correspondence between the Dionysii in the middle of the third century may have been biased, (98) but from what we know it appears to have resulted in a final theology not so very remote from the mature Trinitarianism of Athanasius himself as a result of the Arian controversy, and it is really Trinitarianism, with the Spirit having a place, even if it is formal and the doctrine of the Spirit is undeveloped. Thus it almost appears that there were two parallel streams of doctrine. One would be ecclesiastical and credal, in which the Trinitarian doctrine of God was predominant. There are sections in Athanasius in which he seems to argue that the Trinitarian credal confession has a status of its own which even the Arians did not wish to disturb; this shows that it was traditionally established from time immemorial, so

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(98) See "De Sententia Dionysii", 16-25, and "De Decretis", 25-26.



that no one knew the time when it was first established. The other would be the intellectualist stream, based on the Greek form of the Logos doctrine, in which the Logos took over the operations of the Spirit. This reached its culmination in the tradition that was reflected in the "Contra Gentes", and this includes the fact that no theological work neglects the Spirit more than the "Contra Gentes" and "De Incarnatione"; here the spirit is not only in practice neglected, but also formally and in theory too. One of the things that will be demonstrated later in the thesis is the effect of the Arian controversy on these two streams of thought, as shown especially in Athanasius.

The other question concerns the most interesting absence from the list of philosophies condemned or criticised in the "Contra Gentes", Neo-Platonism. Athanasius might have had Neo-Platonic sympathies (99), and a stronger case could be made out for him than for Augustine, for whom this claim is so often made. But the probable reason is that already Neo-Platonism had passed its zenith. Already with Porphyry and particularly Iamblichus, it had belied its earlier mysticism by allying itself with the fleshly immoralities of the ancient literary and heathen tradition in its encouragement of the classical revival, apparently on the assumption that although one should contemplate the Absolute, there had to be some place for the lesser realities, and if they were all equally remote from it one might as well choose the most familiar. On the other hand, it is probable that Neo-Platonism had criticised Stoicism to such a degree that Christian apologists did not feel it as an effective rival, nor did they know it accurately, while on the other hand they still felt that they could and should accept a measure of its outlook, apologetically at least; hence the acceptance of a monistic objective Logos doctrine, but hence also the fact that when Athanasius criticises certain

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(99) Especially his emphasis on the simplicity of God. Also Origen, De Princ. I:6; God is simplex intellectualis natura.



aspects of it he does so without completely understanding it. We can see what the probable criticism was: very likely the same as Athanasius's in "Contra Gentes", 40, that is, that the only rationality that we know, whether it is the objective rationality in the cosmos or the rationality in man, must manifest itself pluralistically, and therefore any real understanding of the One Rationality, or of any true philosophical One, must involve the reintroduction of what the Greek would consider irrational plurality. In fact, there is a precedent for this criticism; it is almost certainly the meaning of the apparently enigmatic Part II of Plato's "Parmenides" (100); the Platonic Parmenides has refuted the Theory of Forms of the Platonic Socrates, showing that Plato now respects the criticisms of the Eleatic School, but he is now made to refute his own monism on the basis of his own superior dialectic technique (101). If our hypothesis is correct and a similar criticism was made of Stoic monism by the Neo-Platonists (it could be made even more easily of a Stoic type of monism, which after all was concerned with the other plural things, in the interests of an abstract Unity of the Neo-Platonic type, than of the Parmenidean or Neo-Platonic type of unity, in the interests of a return to pluralism), this would be the basis for the accepted picture of non-Christian intellectual society at the time. (That is, it had lost all confidence in a rational unitary construction of society on the Stoic model, and had given itself over to the mysticism of the early classical Neo-Platonists; then it had lost all confidence in this, and had nothing left but the literary classics of ancient Greece; a clear case of the principle of "last to come, first to go".) This would correspond entirely to the economic and social deterioration of the Roman Empire in the third century. This picture of the intellectual state of the times is abundant-

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(100) From 138 onwards.

(101) Shown by the fact that Parmenides is the principal speaker in each part of the Dialogue.



ly confirmed by the "Contra Gentes", in which, as we have seen, the philosophy with which Athanasius is most familiar is the philosophy of the Platonic Socrates, that is, the earliest and most literary dialogues of Plato; he shows relatively little direct familiarity with other philosophies, although they in many cases contributed greatly to his point of view. (In short, the final picture of society and its intelligentsia at that time is of a society that had lost confidence in its ability to go forward, and was turning back to the afterglow of its earliest tradition, which was literary.) Some writers have actually claimed that there was a revival of paganism in the literal sense even as early as the end of the second century, replacing the philosophy and scepticism and rationalism that had till then been the intellectual atmosphere. Corresponding to the catastrophic decline of the city during the third century, and therefore also of the Empire-wide trade and commerce, Stoicism would have been the worst sufferer; indeed it is an interesting possibility that Christian apologetic rescued much of this tradition, including objective natural theology, at the very moment that it became inviable in the outer world. Neo-Platonism or mystical monism would have been in a much better position, but it was none too prosperous (102). There is independent evidence for all this, but as we have seen above the "Contra Gentes" is the best possible evidence for the intellectual state of what must have been the intellectual capital

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(102) See, for example, Robertson, Introduction to "Contra Gentes". For a fuller and detailed account, see Benn, "The Greek Philosophers", Book II, especially chs. II (The Epicureans), IV (The religious Revival, i.e. the revival of long-forgotten cults by the end of, say, the second century at the expense of the more cultured and sceptical philosophy) and V (on Neo-Platonism and its appallingly swift degeneration). He points out that there was an earlier casualty still, the Epicureanism of Lucretius, whose famous poem, "De Rerum Natura" foreshadows Darwin, and thus is a very serious criticism of the argument from Design that Athanasius apparently did not have to reckon with. Benn's book is interesting in that his sympathies are patently with mildly atheistic humanism.



of the world, and abundant confirmation of what has independently been constructed as the general picture.

We have had to give much more attention to the "Contra Gentes" than is usual in a study of Athanasius, for reasons which are obvious, and which are inherent in the nature of this study, with its emphasis on the dynamic of Athanasian theology. Athanasius now turns to consider the Incarnation in the second half of his Apology. This is a measure of his faithfulness to Christ rather than to philosophico-theological traditions. But it might also be said that, even for philosophico-theological reasons, Athanasius would have been confronted with the Incarnation and the need to explain it, if only because of the greater strength, even in his day, of the mystical Neo-Platonist tradition compared with Stoicism, to which the Incarnation would have not been so specially difficult, and which was still predominant at the time of the second-century theologians. The heart and soul of the "De Incarnatione" is in what might be called the aetiological sections, chs. 1-20, the remainder not having the intellectual vigour of the earlier part; the same is probably true of Eusebius's "De Theophania", as far as one can see in view of the disorderly arrangement. (This suggests that for Athanasius the question uppermost in his mind was why such an extraordinary procedure as the Incarnation was adopted by God.)

#### B - De Incarnatione Verbi Dei.

The second book, or rather the second half of this work, is of quite a different character, although, as the title indicates, its essential emphasis is still Christ Himself. The title, according to the Benedictine Text, is:

ΛΟΓΟΣ ΠΕΡΙ ΤΗΣ  
 ΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΝΗΣ ΕΩΣ ΤΟΥ ΛΟΓΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ  
 ΔΙΑ ΣΩΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΗΜΑΣ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΕΙΑΣ  
 ΑΥΤΟΥ.

This title indicates that the centre of interest is the question of how and why the immaterial and supra-sensory



Logos should have taken flesh and condescended to appear. In the main, the discussion starts within the frame of the "Contra Gentes", but it is inevitable that there should be many differences between the two books. We have already seen that there is a subtle change in emphasis in the "Contra Gentes" even between the earlier chapters and the end, and that that change coincides with the point at which Athanasius is really confronted with the creatureliness of man, and particularly the creatureliness of human rationality. At that stage, the subject begins to be treated in a much more soteriological way, and, to the extent that formal references to the "Father of the Logos" begin to be made, in a more Trinitarian way. In the main, these changes are very much more markedly in evidence in this book. Soteriology is, of course, its heart and soul; on the other point, there is much less advance than one would expect, and in fact the specifically intra-Trinitarian questions did not become of supreme importance till the Arian controversy had started. It is significant that the question of why the Logos should have come in the flesh at a definite point in time receives an answer that is absolutely and decisively soteriological, so that this book is one of the first, and greatest, of the classical treatises on this subject; it was, in fact, the first which was solely and explicitly on the work of Christ. This means that the problem of sin was treated at a much deeper level than in the "Contra Gentes", and that the problems of Christology obtrude themselves, again for almost their first time in the history of theology; on the other hand, there is much less than we should expect on the question of man's appropriation of the grace obtained by Christ. Nearly every study of Athanasius deals with the Christology and soteriology of the "De Incarnatione" in full, but although our prime interest is in the Trinitarian theology of Athanasius, we cannot allow ourselves the luxury of relying on a received interpretation, firstly because in many respects it is



unsatisfactory, and secondly because it is most important to understand the exact change produced by the Arian controversy, when Athanasius returned to these matters in the latter portion of the "Contra Arianos", I-III.

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1 In the first chapter, Athanasius introduces the subject, along with a retrospect of the "Contra Gentes": "whereas in what precedes we have drawn out...a sufficient account of the error of the heathen concerning idols...and whereas we have by God's grace noted something also concerning the Godhead (θεότητος) of the Logos, and of His universal providence and power, and that the Good Father through Him orders all things, and all things are moved by Him and vivified in Him (ἐν αὐτῷ ζωοποιεῖται): come...let us...set forth what relates to the Logos's becoming man (1) and His Divine appearance (ἐπιφανεῖς) among us, in order that your piety towards Him may be increased and multiplied, all the more for the seeming low estate (2) of the Logos. For the more He is mocked among the unbelievers, the more witness does He give of His own Godhead; inasmuch as He not only Himself demonstrates to be possible what men wrongly believe to be impossible, but what men deride as unseemly, this by His own goodness He clothes with seemliness, and what men...laugh at as merely human He by His own power demonstrates to be divine, subduing the pretences of idols by His supposed (νομιζομένη) humiliation - by the Cross - and invisibly winning over those who mock and disbelieve to recognise His divinity and power. But to treat this subject it is necessary to recall what has been said, in order that you may not fail to know the cause of the appearance (φανερῶσεως) in a body of the Father's Logos, so high and great, great,

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(1) τὰ περὶ τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως τοῦ Λόγου.  
 (2) ἐκ τῆς δοκούσης εὐτελείας τοῦ Λόγου.



nor think that the Saviour bore a body in consequence of His nature (3) but that being incorporeal by nature and Logos from the beginning, (4) He has yet of the loving-kindness (φιλενθρωπιάν) and goodness of His own Father been manifested (πεφανερώται) to us in a human body (ἐν ἡνθρωπίνῳ σώματι) for our salvation. It is then proper to us to begin the treatment of this subject by speaking of the creation of the universe, and of God the Artificer (δημιουργοῦ), that it may so be duly perceived that its renewal (ἀνακαίνισις), has been the work of the same Logos that made it in the beginning. For it will appear not inconsistent for the Father to have wrought its salvation in Him (ἐν αὐτῷ) through whom He made it". This is important as a general summary of the Theology (in the narrower sense) of the problem. Athanasius unreservedly accepts the Deity of the Logos; in fact, this chapter contains some of the most unambiguous statements in his writings on this point. Indeed, a religion or a theology that is as thoroughly based on the Logos as is the theology of the "Contra Gentes", must be unambiguous here. This makes a complete contrast to the Arians, who were also Logocentric, but dogmatically affirmed that the Logos was a creature. Having most adequately affirmed this, Athanasius sees straight away that the serious problem of the Incarnation, and one which has always proved most difficult and intractable, is how God-in-Christ can be revealed, or can actually work, in the humble and in the end crucified body, and again it is to Athanasius's credit that he sees this straight away and does not dodge the issue. But at this stage we cannot avoid commenting on some of the terminology in which this relation is described, especially in view of the contrast with the definitive terminology of later theology. The close juxtaposition of *σώματος* and Logos as titles of the

(3) φύσεως ἀκούουθι ὅτι σῶμα πεφόρηκεν ὁ ζωτήρ. The translation follows Robertson in L.N.P.N.F. A possibly more accurate one would be "that it was not by obedience to natural law that the Saviour bore a body..." making it general and not particular.

(4) σώματος ὡν τῇ φύσει καὶ λόγος ἐκείνων



Second Person already suggests that for Athanasius it is a matter of what is commonly called ontological knowledge, and what Bertrand Russell calls verbal knowledge (5), that the Logos is essentially incorporeal (6). This is confirmed by the denial that the Incarnation was in consequence of nature. We have already explained the reasons for this usage and its difference from that of Chalcedon (7). Of course, the idea of the Humanity of Christ being fictitious was a positive gain in one sense, in that it enabled Athanasius to answer much more easily the Arian exegesis of Scripture, but it cannot be denied that the Christology is not so rigorous or well-developed as that of Chalcedon. Corresponding to this, there is a tendency to correlate the language of appearance with the humanity of Christ. Athanasius does refer, at the beginning, to the *ἐνανθρώπησιν* of the Logos, which is of course a most correct and unobjectionable term. He also talks about the *ἐπιφάνεια* of the Word; this is almost a technical word, whose antecedents are essentially Hebrew and as such refer to the glorious and terrible manifestation of God. But we have reference to the *δόκουντα* and the *νομιζομένη* humiliation of Christ, and the apparently

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(5) "A History of Western Philosophy," p. 860.

(6) Greek philosophers were mainly materialists, a point often not understood. The principal exception was Plato (and the Platonic Socrates); the least materialistic field of philosophy was the Logos doctrine where it occurred, in general, and the logical and metaphysical element in, say, Aristotle. On the other hand, there is an exception to this exception; the Stoics appear to have treated in their materialistic way even the Logos spermatikea as an alternative form of matter. See Edwyn Bevan, "Stoics and Sceptics", p. 40 ff. On the other hand, the Fathers of course were unanimous in denying that God is corporeal. See Prestige G.P. Thought, ch. 1.

(7) See above, p. 79-80.



normal way in which the Incarnation is described, on the occasions, that is, is by a part of the word  $\phi α ι ν ε ι ν$  or some related word, plus  $\epsilon ν σ \omega \mu α τ ι$ . Now this correlation is susceptible of two different interpretations. For the Hebrews, there is no problem at all: **they** believe in the unity of existence and appearance in exactly the same sense as that in which they are normally held to believe in the unity of word and deed; in fact, the evidence is much stronger. Indeed, Hebrew has no real vocabulary of existence: what was taken to be its vocabulary of existence is really a vocabulary of manifestation, this applying particularly to the verb  $ה'ה$ , usually regarded as the equivalent of "to be", but in classical Hebrew normally meaning "to come to pass", referring, that is, to the manifestation of an event. Genesis, 5:24b:  $\text{אֵלֶּיךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת־נַפְשִׁי} = \text{LXX } \kappa α ι \text{ οὐχ εὗρίσκειτο, ὅτι μετ' ἔθηκεν αὐτὸν ὁ Θεός,}$  does not mean, as the A.V. suggests, that Enoch ceased to exist, but that he disappeared from the earth (in the literal not the metaphorical and meiotic sense!). Similarly, the Name of God Itself really refers to revelation rather than existence, as is shown in Ex. 3:14, where God's answer,  $\text{אֶתֵּן אֶת־נַפְשִׁי} = \text{LXX } \epsilon \gamma \omega \epsilon \mu \iota \delta \epsilon \tau \eta \nu$ , in spite of the LXX, is really an answer to the question "How shall we know that it is really Thou who art speaking to us in the future?" or, to put the question in a rather ludicrously academic way, "What is the criterion of Thy Revelation?" (The answer really means that God has absolute control not only over the time and content of His revelation but also over its manner.) A Christian exegete has no alternative but to regard this verse as a testimony in advance to Christ. Questions of revelation in relation to being are more relevant to the later theology of Athanasius than is usually admitted. But for the present, Athanasius gives no evidence of being in direct contact with the old Hebrew tradition of revelation; for example, in the exegesis of Prov. 8:22 and Amos 4:13 he does not appeal to the Hebrew, as his contemporary Eusebius



of Caesarea did. On the other hand, there is decisive evidence, which we have just examined, of Athanasius' familiarity with the Platonic Socrates, where the Greek dualism between appearance and reality was at its maximum (except for Parmenides (8), who refused to have anything to do with appearance at all). In spite of his unfortunate use of the offending participle in question, <sup>Athanasius</sup> is not a Docetist, as he insists that the appearance of Christ is an essential part of the work of salvation and not a piece of gross demagoguery or a mere concession to our own lack of intellectual vision which is to be ultimately transcended. With this limit, we must note a correlation between Appearance and Underlying Reality, on the one hand, and the Body of Christ and the Pre-existent Divine Logos respectively, on the other. This is the position at which Athanasius starts, and it corresponds to the theory, which appears later on, and is the soteriological equivalent of this, that there is the same correlation between the above and Passion-Action. This of course is an outcome of the older form of Logos theory. Of course, these correlations cannot be always sustained, as a study of the "De Incarnatione" shows; even though it was in a sense the very revival of Platonic Secreticism that made it all the more urgent to account for the Incarnation, the appearance of the Logos as one unique Man, (the effect was to throw Athanasius back on Scripture). But there was no decisive break in this point of view until the Arians compelled a full doctrine of the active Humility of Christ. A final incidental point: (all things are vivified in the Logos (ἐν αὐτῷ ζωοποιεῖται)). This is true, but the point to notice here is that this is a way of speaking that was, at the Council of Constantinople, definitively applied to the Spirit.) As small notice other instances of this, not only in comparison with later Conciliar

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(8) See Burnet, "Early Greek Philosophy", pp. 180-206.



formulae, but with the later works of Athanasius. One of the main effects of the second and third century Logos doctrine was that the Logos took over the functions of the Spirit, and this is clear in point.

At the conclusion of the chapter, the subject proper is introduced with the contention that the Creator and the Redeemer of the world are the same. This is of course one of the fundamentals of Christian faith, and Athanasius had particular reason to emphasise it, since up to the time of writing the worst heresy by a long way, and the most notorious and typical one, was Marcionitism.

2 In this chapter, Athanasius refutes three non-Christian doctrines of Creation. First, there is the Epicurean doctrine, according to which creation was by chance changes in the motion of primeval atoms, without any intervention by a higher power; this is the first time that this philosophy is mentioned, unless the whole of the "Contra Gentes" is regarded as an answer to it. It is answered by the classical argument from Design. The idea, as in, e.g. Plato's "Timaeus", that God was merely the Demiurge who fashioned pre-existent matter or  $\Sigma\lambda\eta$  (9), receives the just reply that this makes the matter co-ordinate with God if it has any significance at all. The Marcionite Gnostic doctrine that Creator and Redeemer were distinct beings is refuted by Scripture alone (Matt. 19:4-6, John 1:3); even in an apologetic work, this is essentially a matter of faith.

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(9) See "Timaeus", 30ff. to which Athanasius apparently refers. There is a tradition that this is Plato's doctrine. A. E. Taylor, "Plato..." 442-444, admits that the keynote of the "Timaeus" is the imposition of order out of chaos, rather than perhaps the original material, and Gomperz, "Greek Thinkers", 2.T. Vol. III (appx.) 366, cites 49A, 51A, 52B. But Taylor, loc. cit. maintains, rightly that Plato is very much more ambiguous than has been often maintained, and that the actual text can be interpreted in a manner consistent with creation ex nihilo. The Athanasian doctrine is described as "Schöpfungstheismus", Atzberger, op. cit. 185f. with which he includes the idea that creatures pre-existed as ideas in God's mind.



3 The next chapter begins with the true doctrine, that Creation is ex nihilo, per Verbum, and essentially an act of God's grace. To support this, he quotes Gen. 1:1, Heb. 11:3 and the celebrated passages from Hermas Mand. I and Plato's "Timaeus" 29. There now follows an important passage in which the gift of the Logos to men is more fully defined: (101B) "...having taken especial pity, above all things on earth, upon the race of men, as it would have been incapable of enduring eternally in virtue of the principle of its own origin (10), He gave them a further gift, and He did not merely create man as He created all the irrational beings on the earth, but made them after His own Image, giving them a portion even of the power of His own Logos, so that having as it were a kind of reflection of the Logos, they might be able to abide ever in blessedness (11), living the true life which belongs to the saints in paradise. But knowing that the will of man could sway from side to side, He secured in anticipation the grace given them by a law and by a place. For He brought them into His own garden and gave them a law, so that if they kept the grace and remained good they might still keep the life in paradise without sorrow or pain or care, besides having the promise of incorruption ( $\lambda\phi\theta\alpha\rho\sigma\iota\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ ) in heaven; but if they transgressed and turned back and became evil they might know themselves to be incurring that corruption in death which is theirs by nature (12), no longer to live in paradise but cast out from it from that time forth to die and abide in death and corruption" (13). Athanasius concludes the chapter by quoting Gen. 2:16-17, interpreting LXX  $\theta\alpha\nu\acute{\alpha}\tau\omega\ \alpha\pi\omicron\theta\alpha\nu\epsilon\iota\sigma\theta\epsilon$  = M.T.  $\text{וְלֹא תָמוּת$  as "not dying merely, but also abiding ever in the corruption of death ( $\tau\eta\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\alpha\nu\acute{\alpha}\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \phi\theta\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}$ )".

This passage is most important as indicating the meaning of

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- (10) Κατὰ τὸν τῆς ἰδίου γενέσεως λόγον.  
 (11) Κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ εἰκόνα... μεταδούς αὐτοῖς καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἰδίου Λόγου δυνάμεως, ἵνα ὥσπερ σκιάς τινὲς ἔχοντες τοῦ Λόγου, καὶ γενομένοι λογικοί, διαμέκῃ ἐν μακαριότητι συνῆθωσι...  
 (12) τὴν ἐν θανάτῳ κατὰ φύσιν φθοράν.  
 (13) μένειν ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ καὶ ἐν τῇ φθορᾷ.



λογικός and therefore λόγος, for Athanasius. The primary meaning, of course, of the former word, is that the thing so described and the Logos in and with it, in Athanasius' Greek terms, the συνουσία and παρουσία of the Logos. This appears to be conceived as a sort of quasi-Platonic participation of the Logos, for example (14) μεταδίδωσι (i.e. gives so that we participate in it), the gift of the Logos. From the conjunction of language, it appears that the sealing of man in the image of God has much the same meaning. What is more interesting is the concrete form of the blessing conferred by the presence of the Logos. There is no doubt whatever that it is immortality, or rather what the Christian faith call **eternal life**. In spite of the many objectionable features of the hypothesis of Harnack on this point, there is no point in disagreeing with it in this basic aspect, and in any case Harnack is not justified in going further and say that the instillation of this grace of immortality is a physiological or even a pharmacological act (14). Besides, within the meaning that it bears in this connection, immortality is not immortality pure and simple; it is immortality in beatitude, the eternal living of a full life in the blessed fellowship with our loving Creator. The "immortality" of suspended animation, let alone the immortality of the eternally damned is about as far as possible from the mind of Athanasius. The whole concept is completely scriptural. It is all the more interesting in view of the Platonism of Athanasius, that there is ~~no~~ trace here of the type of purely rationalistic reasoning that is found in the last argument of the "Phaedo" (15), that is, that the soul (ψυχή, also the word for "life") is the opposite of death, and therefore that nothing that is worthy of the name ψυχή can have anything to do with death at all! This gift is emphatically supernatural (16). His reason is that

(14) See "What is Christ ~~unity?~~" (E.T. of "Wesen des Christentums") p. 232ff.

(15) 106ff.

(16) The question of whether Athanasius saw this original and, in the primary sense, natural, state of man, as something supernatural or not



in dealing with the Incarnation, Athanasius was thrown back on Scripture insofar as it was recognised as having a plain and unambiguous

(16) cont. - is a question which has caused great difficulty. Among Liberal Protestants, Harnack was quite definite; (Hist. Dogm. E.T. Vol. III, 278f.) "The conceptions formed by Athanasius of the original state of man, of sin, and of grace, show especially his inability to distinguish between nature and grace. In his work, "De Incarnatione", he strove to prove that the Incarnation was a necessity on the part of God. Therefore, he emphasised strongly the destiny of man and distinguishes it sharply from his empirical condition; for this destiny sets God a task, which He must carry out under all circumstances if His goodness (*ἀγαθότης*) is to remain in force. Therefore, in many of the arguments of this work, human nature appears as the creaturely and sensible condition, while everything else, including the endowment of reason, takes the form of a *donum superadditum*, potentially given in the original state, and binding on God Himself. The change which took place in man through sin, or through death, is accordingly conceived as a loss of the divine...

But even in the "De Incarnatione", and to a still greater extent in the later anti-Arian writings, Athanasius defends the idea that the rational spirit... belongs to man's constitution, is immortal, and at bottom also inalienable... (These are reconciled by the arguments that) ... (1) the *ψυχὴ λογικὴ* is only rational (logical) because it partakes in the Logos... (and so)... can be termed, although a natural possession, external... (2) it is only in the apologetic arguments of the treatise "De Incarnatione" that Adam's fall and its consequence appear as forming a tremendous cleavage... (p. 275) it is not to be wondered at that the discussion of grace in connection with creation and the natural endowments of man only resulted... in tautologies... (as distinct allegedly from the non-eschatological "Contra Arianos").

Robertson (Intro. to this book, L.N.P.-N.P. 32-33), says much the same, without the questionable overtones.

Voigt, "Die Lehre des hl. Athanasius...", p. 107, agrees that the Image is a *donum superadditum*.

Among Protestants, Hoss denies this, (Studien 61-62): "Für die Apologie (so. C.G. = De Inc., whose authenticity he is trying to prove by comparison with the remainder of Athanasius) und Athanasius sind Natur und Gnade keine gegengesetzte. Die kreatürliche Wesensbestand der Dinge dem er verdankt sein Dasein der speziell als *Χρῆς* bezeichnete Teilnahme am Bild des Logos ist im Grunde Natur, denn die Geschöpfe können ohne sie gar nicht bestehen".

The criticism of Harnack has also been made by the Roman Catholic Atsberger, in the extract, op. cit. p. 159, that we have already quoted at length (see above p. 86), and in which he incriminates Platonism as the cause of the confusion. Bernard, "L'Image de Dieu d'après St. Athanasius", (1938), in the first half, passim, esp. 57-76, comments rather more compassionately, but reaches essentially the same conclusion, except that he blames the general imprecision of the Greek terminology rather than Plato specially. Strüter, "Die Erlösungslehre des heiligen Athanasius", pp. 22-23, also agrees that Athanasius is vague on the distinction between natural and supernatural for the same reason as Atsberger's, Platonism, but denies that Athanasius regarded the Image as a *donum superadditum* in the regular meaning of the concept. Pell, "Die Lehre des heiligen Athanasius von der Sünde und der Erlösung", 23f. denies that Athanasius fails to make the distinction, and more recently, Bouyer, "L'Incarnation et L'Eglise-Corps du Christ dans la Théologie de Saint Athanasius" (1943) agrees, and emphatically states, p. 37, the correct view, that *ἀφ' αὐτοῦ*, though a property of our life as given by God and not a brute fact, is strictly speaking peculiar to God. Barchin, "Le Rôle du Verbe



meaning. Now, in the field of the cause of the Incarnation, in the field, that is, that is now generally termed God in Creation, Man and Sin, it was always recognised that Scripture spoke plainly, and in one definite locus classicus(17). It is in what might be called the How of the Incarnation or the What-it-was of the Incarnation, where Scripture is not so immediately plain, that Athanasius is not so certain of himself, and that he had to elaborate the definitive doctrine in his later conflict with the Arians.

4 The beginning of chapter 4 is a conclusion of the above section and a transition to the following one: "You are wondering, perhaps, for what possible reason, having proposed to speak of the Incarnation of the Logos (18), We are at present treating of the origin of mankind. But this too properly belongs to the aim of our treatise. For...the reason for His coming down was because of us (19), and...our transgression called forth <sup>the loving kindness of the Logos</sup>... (For of His becoming incarnate we were the object (20))...and on account of our salvation did He exercise His Philanthropia in being born and in appearing even in a human body". In spite of Raven (Apollinarianism, pp. 124-5.), this is a plain case of what he calls the "Antiochene" view, and in which the "Alexandrian" view is rejected. Raven writes, "...in it (i.e. the last extract of Diodore in Leontius), Diodore definitely claims that the Incarnation is ultimately due to mankind, since, if there had been no Fall of Man, the constraining cause of Christ's coming would have been lacking. It is an

(16) cont. - dans l'Oeuvre de la Création et la Sanctification d'après Saint Athanase", Angelicum 1938, pp. 201-232, comes to the unsatisfactory conclusion that there are two Images, a natural image, which is created, and a supernatural image, which is a participation in the Logos. Bernard, (op. cit. 25-26), shows conclusively that as distinct from earlier Fathers, Athanasius knows only one Image.

~~This highly confused picture does not permit sorting out at this stage, but we can return to it in the resumé (p. ).~~

(17) The reference is to the Epistle to the Romans.

(18) τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως τοῦ Λόγου.

(19) ὁ μὲν αἰτία γέγονε προφάσις τοῦ καθόδου.

(20) τῇ γὰρ ἐκείνου ἐνομήτωσιν ἡμεῖς χεράμεν σπώθεις.



admission that can be paralleled in Irenaeus (e.g. Adv. Haer. III:21), but perhaps from no other early writer. Certainly, all the Platonists who, like Origen and Apollinarius, tried to represent the Incarnation as a manifestation in time of an eternal inclination of the divine nature towards man, would unhesitatingly have rejected it." This is quite mistaken. The view of Diodore the Antiochene would be a perfect paraphrase of Athanasius, whom Raven correctly and unhesitatingly classifies as a Platonist and, much less correctly, considers to be a sort of Apollinarian before Apollinarius. Platonism is a much more complicated thing than Raven realises, and the element in theology which he considers as Platonist, while it may be an element in Plato, is better considered as a sort of proto-Hegelianism, and, if we confine ourselves to ancient philosophy, was more at home among the Stoics and with Heraclitus (21) than in Plato, and certainly would have run right against the Platonic Socrates of the Socratic Dialogues of Plato, which as we have already seen was the principal philosophical influence on Athanasius. (On this basis, an eternal predisposition to Incarnation in the fullest Christian sense was the one thing that the Logos could not have, and therefore this needs a very special explanation - hence, as Athanasius says, the need for a special treatment of the origin of man and also of sin and perdition.) Of course, such a special explanation, which is necessarily absolutely Biblical, inevitably puts a great strain on Platonism or any rationalist position. For the time being, then, Athanasius is, in the later terminology, an Infralapsarian, if anything because of his Platonism rather than in spite of it; there is still a tendency to think of the cosmological supremacy of the Logos as representing His normal nature, and the Incarnation as something that needs special explanation and that was specially caused in the infralapsarian sense. Athanasius later does return to the

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(21) In view of their Monistic Logos doctrine.



more Supralapsarian position with reference to the Incarnation, but not till a fairly late stage of the Arian controversy, that is, the end of the exegesis of Prov. 8:22 LXX, C. Ar. II:75ff.

The next section, from 4:104A to 6:105D, is a full consideration of the doctrine of sin, and the nature of corruption. This will not be examined in such great detail, but cannot be entirely neglected, for two reasons, firstly, because it has often been seriously misrepresented, and secondly, because one of the main issues is the difference in emphasis between the "De Incarnatione" and the "Contra Arianos". "Thus then, God has made man and willed that he should abide in incorruption (ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ), but men having despised the contemplation of God (22), and devised and contrived (λογισάμενοι καὶ ἐπινοήσαντες) evil for themselves...received the death sentence with which they were threatened; henceforth they no longer remained as they were made, but were corrupted even as they devised, and death reigned over them as a king. For transgression of the commandment was turning them back to their natural state (23), so that just as οὐκ ὄντες γέγονασιν, so also, as might be expected, they might look for corruption εἰς τὸ εἶναι in the course of time (24). For if, out of a former state of non-existence (25), they were called into being by the presence and loving-kindness (φιλοφροσύνη) of the Logos, it followed naturally that when men were bereft of the knowledge (ἐννοίας) and were turned back εἰς τὰ οὐκ ὄντα, for what is evil is not, but what is good is (26), since they have come to be from God that is, they should be everlastingly bereft even of being, in other words, that they should be disintegrated and abide in death and corruption.

(22) τὴν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν κατανόησιν - different from the phrases used in "Contra Gentes", but just as Platonic.

(23) Ἡ γὰρ παράβασις τῆς ἐντολῆς εἰς τὸ κατὰ φύσιν αὐτοὺς ἐπέστρεψεν.

(24) Does εἰς τὸ εἶναι mean "in eo quod sunt" - Migne, that is, even in those very matters in which they exist, or, is an οὐ or μή omitted, as Robertson, L.N.P.-N.F., suggests?

(25) φύσιν ἔχοντες τοῦ μή εἶναι ποτε...

(26) οὐκ ὄντα γὰρ ἐστὶ τὰ κακά, ὄντα δὲ τὰ καλὰ - a repetition of the same remark in "Contra Gentes", 4:9C.



For man is by nature (κατὰ φύσιν) mortal inasmuch as He is made ex nihilo (27). But by reason of his likeness to Him that Is (and if he still preserved this likeness by keeping Him in his knowledge, he would resist his natural corruption (28) and remain incorrupt (ἀφθαρτος)... (Wisd. 6:18)... and live henceforth as God (ps. 82:6)...

5 "For God has not only made us ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, but He gave us freely, by the grace of the Logos, a life corresponding to God, (κατὰ Θεόν). But men, having rejected things eternal and by counsel of the devil turned to the things of corruption have become the causes of their own corruption in death, being...by nature corruptible (κατὰ φύσιν φθαρτοί) but destined by the grace following from partaking in the Logos (29) (τῆς τοῦ Λόγου μετουσίᾳ) to have escaped their natural state, if they had remained good. For through the Logos which co-existed with them, even ἡ κατὰ φύσιν φθορά did not come near them...But when this was come to pass, men ἄπ' ἐθνησκον (imperf. =? began to die), while corruption henceforth prevailed (aorist) against them, gaining even more than its natural power over the whole race, owing to the transgression of the commandment, and the threat of the Deity as a further factor against them. For even in their misdeeds men had not stopped short at any bounds, but gradually (κατ' ὀλίγον) pressing forward, have passed on beyond all measure...(Follows a description of sin along the lines of Rom. 1:23ff; vv. 26-7 quoted).

6 "For this cause them, death having gained its hold over men and corruption abiding upon them, the race of men was perishing, the rational man made in God's image was disappearing (30). For death...gained a legal hold over us (31), and it was impossible to evade the law, since it had been laid down by God because of the transgression, and the result was in truth most monstrous and unseemly."

{27} ὅτε δὲ ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων γεγονώς  
 {28} τὴν κατὰ φύσιν φθοράν. φθορά = corruption, throughout.  
 {29} The Platonic concept of "sharing" again, pointedly reminiscent of later language about the Spirit; cf. in Athanasius, C. Ar. I:47-52 and Ad Serap. I:27.  
 {30} Again, imperfect tense each time.  
 {31} ἡμῶν λοιπὸν ἵσχυε καθ' ἡμῶν.



These extracts confirm what we have noticed in the preceding section, that the principal concrete benefit to the individual of fellowship with the Logos is *ἀφθαρσία*, immortality with beatitude. The conclusion of ch. 4 indicates that, when Athanasius uses the word *θεωποίησις*, etc., he is thinking predominantly of this gift (in fact the principal theistic attribute in classical literature). But it is even more important to notice that, correspondingly, the opposite of the state of being *λογικός* is no longer *ἄλογος*, irrationality in the ordinary sense, but *θάνατος* (death) and *φθορά* (corruption). Now it appears for a time in ch. 4 that Athanasius is falling into an ambiguity, which is the other side of the above-mentioned uncertainty as to whether the Image is natural or supernatural, that is, of not adequately distinguishing between the lowliness of man as a sinner and the lowliness and mortality of man as a creature. This is much more dangerous than the former ambiguity(32). Of course, in saying that man and everything else created *ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων* depends on the sustaining grace of God for his continued existence, Athanasius is in agreement with the whole history of theology. And it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that there is a real anti-creative power corrupting man (cf. Barth's "Das Nichtige" of K.D. Vol. III:III). But the very point of the doctrine of creation *ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων*, as distinct from *ἐκ μὴ ὄντων*, is a denial that this power is identical with that out of which God made man, as if matter or materies were itself essentially evil. This error would be the most natural thing in the world for a theologian under the influence of the Platonic Socrates. This is to say nothing of Athanasius's possibly suspect use of the notion of Being as that which is essentially present in God and present by participation in creatures, the perfect setting for a doctrine of the analogia entis in the sense denounced by Barth. The matter is even more suspect when we consider Athanasius's use of *φθορά*. The word is unfortunately used

(32) See above, fn. 16, for a detailed study of various comments on this question.



twice in ch. 4 and once early in ch. 5 for the natural state, *κατὰ φύσιν* etc., of man. Now, if there is one thing that corruption is not, it is natural in this sense (33). However universal it is in the empirical sense, it is less natural to fallen man than blessed immortality to unfallen man. These questions are of importance in relation to the question of whether the soteriology of Athanasius consists simply in the supplying to man of a top layer of being which is simply lacking in sinful man, as distinct from the radical reconstruction of even the layers of being that are left to the sinner. This in turn is related to the charge of Stülcken, Hoss and Raven that the Christology of Athanasius is virtually Apollinarian; the Logos, that is, is placed top of the lower human corporeal layers of being, in place of the human soul (34). As against this must be set the fact that for Athanasius

(33) I.e. in the sense of being absolutely aboriginal, as well as the more familiar sense. It would be right in the Pauline sense of "man without Christ". See above p. 79-80.

(34) Shapland's Note 5 on Ep. II ad Serap. ch. 9 is the best brief summary on the vexed question of the Apollinarian tendencies in Athanasius. "...Earlier students of Athanasius based their estimate of his Christology on the two books against Apollinarius, now admitted to be spurious. See for example, Pell, "Lehre des hl. Athanasius", p. 125. Harnack, H.D. IV, 147ff, led the way in questioning whether Athanasius had any real appreciation of Christ's humanity, and has been followed by Stülcken, "Athanasiana", pp. 90ff, and Hoss, "Studien", pp. 77ff, who suggest that for Athanasius the manhood is nothing more than a series of qualities and attributes an abstract nature borne by a person who is never really human. The criticism has been pressed even further by Raven, "Apollinarianism", pp. 79ff and 118ff. But on the other hand see Robertson, Introd. lxxvii, Prestige, "Fathers and Heretics", p. 218, and R. V. Sellers, "Two Ancient Christologies", pp. 53ff. Athanasius was certainly no docetist, if docetism be interpreted to be what both its adherents and critics in the Early Church understood it to be. If we find it hard to discover the human Jesus in his presentation of Christ, it is because he is preoccupied with the doctrine of the Trinity and never comes to grips with the problem of the human consciousness in Christ, partly, too, because his psychology is unreal to us, inasmuch as it was possible for him to talk of knowledge and ignorance and mind and will as though they were material or physical things".

We have quoted this note almost complete, even though the last sentence applies to the presentation in the "Contra Arianos" III:26-58, and Ad Serap. II:9 rather than the "De Incarnatione". However, we can make it apply here by substituting the aetiology of salvation instead of the Trinity. We shall critically discuss this whole way of thinking later. However, a few additional observations are necessary. Although the example quoted by Shapland is a Roman Catholic, the earlier interpretation was



φθора obviously means something far more serious than any merely natural state of man. For example, the use of this word and its relatives in the section on the Cross and Resurrection, e.g. ch. 21:133C, 22:136B, 23 fin., 26:141A and 141B, indicates clearly that it has two possible meanings, either what later Christians referred to as eternal death and the wrathful eternity of it, or, in the biological sense, to the putrefactive changes which make death completely and hopelessly irreversible in this sense. Although there is nothing in Liddell and Scott to suggest this emphatically, it is highly probable that the latter was the primary meaning, or at any rate the prior of these two.

On this basis, it is evident that, in spite of occasional lapses, Athanasius took the gravest possible view of the state of fallen

(34) cont. - absolutely universal both among Roman Catholics and Protestants until about 1874, cf. for a Protestant example, Voigt, "Die Lehre des Athanasius von Alexandrien...", 1861, pp. 122-145. This was kept up much later, till about 1914, by Roman Catholic scholars, cf. Atzberger, op. cit. 198-207 (1880), and especially and supremely Weigl, "Untersuchungen zur Christologie des heiligen Athanasius," (1914) bases his whole Christological interpretation of Athanasius on the books against the Apollinarians, which he recognises as having been written either directly or indirectly at very little remove by Athanasius in his final years (pp. 87-141). However, beginning with Bardenhewer, "Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur", Vol. III (1923), in the appropriate place, Roman Catholic scholarship now accepts that these books are spurious, and this is now the general opinion in Catholic Encyclopaedias, etc. Roman Catholics now defend Athanasius against the charge of Apollinarianism by arguments that refer primarily to the C. Ar. III, and will have to be considered later. On the other side, there is the frank statement of M. Richard, "Saint Athanase et la Psychologie du Christ selon les Ariens", (Lille, Facultés catholiques, 1947), says quite bluntly, p. 6: "avant 362...on ne trouve pas, dans les écrits authentiques de ce Docteur, la moindre mention de l'âme humaine du Sauveur". (as distinct from Tom. ad Antioch 7.). As far as liberal or radical Protestantism is concerned, Harnack was antedated by F. C. Baur, "Die christliche Lehre von der Dreieinigkeit", 1841, pp. 570ff, and also apparently by Bähringer, "Athanasius und Arius...", 1874; pp. 114ff., <sup>8th ed.</sup> who severely criticises what he describes as Athanasius's pure Logos-flesh Christology of the "De Incarnatione" and repeats this criticism with reference to the "Contra Arianos" later, 234-248; his criticism is particularly interesting on account of its great severity and because it goes with a much higher and more orthodox estimate of the worth of Athanasius's anti-Arian theology. He does not mention the books against the Apollinarians, for good or ill, at all.



**man.** Robertson's statement that Athanasius "makes no such vast difference between the condition of fallen and unfallen man as has commonly been assumed to exist" (I.N.P.-N.F., introd. lxxi) represents with rare exactitude the opposite of the truth (35). The revolting character of both sin and of the consequent state of man, its sheer outrage to God and to man himself, is something of which Athanasius was pungently aware. Whence this? In the middle of ch. 5, Athanasius comes out with the solution; the state of fallen man is so much worse since it directly involved the wrath of God, being as it <sup>were</sup> ~~was~~ a transgression of His law, which man cannot escape and which God could not and would not abrogate. For Athanasius, as for Paul, the strength of sin was the law. This passage seems to be strangely ignored by those who, like Robertson, (I.N.P.-N.F., introd. lxxi) and Aulén (Christus Victor, Eng. ed. pp. 59-60), wish to use Athanasius as a stick to beat the mediaeval Westerners like Anselm and the Reformers. He had almost as well developed a sense of the wrath of God and its decisive significance for soteriology as anyone since him, and far more than any of his post-New Testament predecessors.

Finally, we must make some further remarks about the doctrine of sin. It is nonsense to maintain that for Athanasius man suffers only a gradual deterioration along a continuous line from beatitude to damnation. The point of the imperfect tenses that we have noted in the texts, and  $\kappa\alpha\tau' \omicron\lambda\iota\gamma\omicron\nu$  (5:105B), is that fallen man was engaged in a whole series

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(35) Unfortunately, this view is echoed by Shapland, n. 18 on Ad Serap. I:23, which spoils an otherwise sound note on the difficulty in Athanasius of determining what is nature and what is aboriginal grace. Examples of writers whose appreciation is on the right lines are; Hoss, op. cit., pp. 64-5, and Strüter, "Die Erlösungslehre des heiligen Athanasius", p. 48 (R.C.). Bernard, op. cit. 67-9, takes an intermediate position, suggesting that in his earlier writings Athanasius leant more to a gradual Fall, and in his later writings to a more radical one, a position in which the author cannot find anything good, apart from the fact that some place is given to the latter interpretation. But in the main, it is fair to say that not one critic has ever described Athanasius's position on this matter properly. The least unsatisfactory is probably Harnack, with his emphasis on the legal and penal side of Athanasius's soteriology (see later fn. 59, p. 120. this chapter).



of actions, all of which were thoroughly bad. Athanasius here does not allow to fallen man even the relative goodness that Augustine and Calvin, normally condemned as misanthropists, find in heathen classical life. (36)

Indeed, it is an open question whether Athanasius does not paint too dark a picture of human life, which could be criticised as unrealistic, and which would not allow him to point out that our very virtues were corrupt. But the point is that there is not one trace of any principle in fallen man that can yield good fruit or even moderately good fruit. The significance of the imperfects and the *κατ' ὀλίγον* is rather that evil in fallen man is dynamic. Men invent evil for themselves, and in that very way trap themselves in a vicious circle that brings them more and worse evil. The *κατ' ὀλίγον* really makes things worse, since man is denied even the poor consolation that he has reached his nadir. To talk about Athanasius as teaching that man suffers no more than a gradual deterioration is the same kind of solecism as one would commit in saying that Shakespeare's Macbeth was a good man in Act II when he murdered Duncan, compared with his state in Act IV, when he butchered Macduff's family. Again, Athanasius does full justice to sin as an activity of man as distinct from a *πάθος* or passivity. He is even prepared to allow that sin in fallen man occupies the place that rightfully belongs to his noblest essence, and in fact is even a corrupt dysfunction of that essence. Men are *λογισάμενοι καὶ ἐπινοήσαντες ἑαυτοῖς τὴν κακίαν* - even their rationality is involved. However, there is one thing that can be questioned. Athanasius admittedly speaks of the sinner transgressing the law, or, in other words, breaking God's bounds, and to that extent he does treat sin as being pride, and pathological doubt, as well as - to put it perfectly frankly - damned foolery. The author is adopting the Barthian schematic representation of sin with his eyes open, as it so incomparably fits the

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(36) See, for example, De Civ. Dei, Books 17-19, and especially Calvin, Inst., Book II, Ch. II, sections 15-16



necessities of the case. But even in man's very transgression the thing that interests Athanasius most is man's foolery, his pathological preoccupation with what is not (37). In his treatment of this aspect of sin, there is no real evidence that he has gone far beyond his Platonistic treatment of the issue in the "Contra Gentes", whereby "what is not" is a characteristic of created things as such, rather than the evil which God has spared the world. He never quite makes the mistake of the "Contra Gentes", where he all but takes the view that Adam and Eve took the forbidden fruit because it tasted good. But this view is still influential. It must be admitted that Athanasius takes a much more serious view of "preoccupation with what is not" than in the "Contra Gentes" (38). In the former it leads essentially to idolatry, or worship of non-existent entities in the sense in which a round square or a "god" in the form of an idolatrous image is a non-existent entity. Here the penalty is literally annihilation. But this proves that in the main the interest of Athanasius was in what we now call sanctification rather than in justification and vocation.

The remainder of ch. 6 and the first sentence of ch. 7 answer the question, what was God to do in this situation? This chapter almost duplicates the account in the *Cur Deus Homo* of Anselm; God could not leave man to his fate, but could not abrogate His law of sin and death; therefore, something extraordinary had to be done (39). However, the

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(37) See the section on sin in Barth, *Ch. Dog.*, in each of Vols. IV, Pts. I, II, and III. Foolery (in IV:II) is the opposite of the exaltation and sanctification of humanity in Christ, Pride (in IV:VI) is the opposite of God's humiliation in the Incarnation, and its annulment is Justification. Mendacious doubt (in IV:III) is the opposite of Christ as the Guarantor that the whole process of reconciliation will go to its completion, and its annulment is our calling in hope.

(38) See ch. 4, and all following chapters up to 29.

(39) See, for Anselm, *"Cur Deus Homo"*, I:12-13 (*Sancti Anselmi Opera Omnia*), ed. F.S. Schmitt, C.S.B. For an analysis, see McIntyre, "St. Anselm and his Critics", p. 96ff.



remainder of chapter 7 is worthy of fuller examination to indicate the exact difference between Athanasius and Anselm. Athanasius opens with a consideration, and rejection, of the possibility that mere repentance would be enough, and then goes on to consider what would really be necessary: "...For one might pronounce this worthy of God, as if, just as from transgression men have become set towards corruption, so from repentance they might once more be set towards incorruption. But repentance would, firstly, fail to preserve the consistency of God...nor, secondly, does repentance call men back from what is according to nature (κατὰ φύσιν) - it merely stays them from acts of sin (ἁμαρτημάτων). Now, if there were merely a misdemeanour in question, and not a consequent corruption, repentance would have been well enough. But if, when transgression had once gained a start, men became involved in that corruption κατὰ φύσιν, and were deprived of the grace which they had, being in the Image (40), what further step was needed? Or what was required for such grace and such recall, but the Logos of God, Who had also made the universe at the beginning ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντα? For it was His once more to bring the corruptible to incorruption, and to maintain intact the just claim of the Father over all. For being Logos of the Father and above all, He alone was of natural fitness both able to recreate everything and worthy to suffer (παθεῖν) on behalf of all, and be ambassador (πρεσβεῦσαι) for all with the Father". (In the last sentence, Athanasius comes very close to the true doctrine that only one Who is God (Athanasius says Logos of God) can really suffer on our behalf. It is no accident that this passage is by far the most satisfactory doctrine of God the Father in the whole of the "Contra Gentes" and "De Incarnatione".) Athanasius rises to this language because he is introducing a topic which is, again, forced on him by Scriptural witness, but for which he has yet no conceptual tools

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(40) τὴν τοῦ κατ' εἰκόνα χάριν.



to express and analyse. In general, the rationalistic doctrine of the *ἀπάθεια* (41) of God hindered him, and this shows in the remainder of the book. This is related to the point which we are going to make on the relation between Athanasius and Anselm. The point of Anselm's hamartiology is that sin, being an affront to the infinite majesty of God, partakes in some inverse sense of the very infinity of God Himself; therefore, the debt that must be paid must also partake of the infinity of God. What is often criticised as Anselm's "feudalism" is no more than his attempt to establish this (42). Thus, the suffering that is necessary for reconciliation must also partake of the infinity of God, and this is the reason for Christ having to be wholly God. Athanasius would have been debarred from this by the *ἀπάθεια* of God. For him, sin is infinite relative to anything that one man can do, or even to any collective integration of humanity, since it is a corruption of the whole of man's nature (this is the strong point about the use of *φύσις* as being basically involved in corruption); but it does not partake of the infinity of God. On the other hand, the infinity of sin and corruption with respect to humanity is so great that what is needed is nothing less than an act which partakes of the immensity of creation itself. When we have said all this, we must admit that what has often been denounced in Athanasius, his "physicism", is his strongest point. We dare not have a purely ethical doctrine of reconciliation, as if the soul was all-important and the body of no importance at all. Nor is it safe to ignore the problem of the relation of sinful or reconciled man to creation as a whole, or even to his own fellows. Even at the level of the individual soul, man not only has a past and present; he also has a future; he must not only be cleared from past and present guilt;

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(41) This is, of course, the famous Stoic word for the behaviour of the ideal man, which is a deliberate attempt to exalt man above Heb. 4:15.

(42) See Anselm, op. cit. I:20-22 and McIntyre, op. cit. ch. II (56-117).



he must have the power to live the life of a pardoned man who sins no more. It is the fact that all these necessities of reconciliation have a universality about them, which far transcends any individual acts of man, that makes the denunciation of "physicism" a very bad business (43).

8 After what might be called the aetiology of the Incarnation, Athanasius considers the Incarnation itself, that is, how it happened, though without losing his basic aetiological interest. In the next three chapters, the subject imperceptibly changes to how the Incarnation and its sequelae were able to satisfy the above need; the annulment of the legal curse of sin and death that hung over men: "For this purpose then the incorporeal and incorruptible and immaterial Logos of God (44) comes to our realm, howbeit He was not far from us before. For no part of creation is left void of Him; He has filled all things everywhere, remaining present with His own Father. For He comes in condescension to show loving-kindness (φιλοφροσύνη) and to manifest Himself... (For reasons which are a summary of the above)... He takes unto Himself a body, and that of no different sort from ours (45). For He did not simply will to appear to become embodied (ἐνσώματι), or will merely to appear. For if He had willed simply to appear, He would have been able to effect His appearance by some other and greater means as well. But He takes a body from our own kind, and not merely so, but from a spotless and stainless virgin... For being Himself high and mighty and Framer of everything, He prepares (κατασκευάζει) the body in the Virgin as a temple (ναόν) for

(43) Bornhäuser, "Die Vergottungslehre des Athanasius und Johannes Damascenus...", severely criticises the whole position of Harnack that the theology of "the Greeks" is primarily physical in its orientation; see references in Introduction. In general, he rebuts this charge, in the case of Athanasius, by quotation from the last chapters of the "De Incarnatione", with their emphasis on faith and on the importance of the kerygmatic preaching (and hearing) of the Word; also from the later writings including C. Ar. III:17-25 and the "quicumque dixerit". On the other hand, he does not quite feel the full strength of what "physicism" there is in Athanasius. By far the best commentary on this matter is K. Barth, Ch. Dog. Vol. I, Pt. II, pp. 126-131.

(44) ὁ ἀσώματος καὶ ἀφάρτος καὶ ἄυλος τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγος.

(45) λαμβάνει ἑαυτῷ σῶμα, καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἄλλότριον τοῦ ἡμετέρου.



Himself, and makes it His very own as an instrument, being manifested in it, and dwelling in it ~~in it~~. And thus, taking from our own sphere a body like our own ( $\tauὸ ὁμοίον$ ), because all were under the penalty ( $\sigmaπενθύνους$  + gen.) of the corruption of death He gave it over to death instead of all (46), and offered it to the Father - doing it moreover of His loving-kindness ( $\phiιλανθρωπῶς$ ), so that, firstly, all being held to have died in Him (47), the law involving the ruin of man might be undone - inasmuch as its power ( $\ἐξουσία$ ) had been fully spent in the Lord's ( $\κυριακῶ$ ) body, and no longer had any place against men like Him, and that, secondly, whereas men had turned towards corruption, He might turn them back towards incorruption and quicken them from death by the appropriation of the body (48) and the grace of the Resurrection...".

9 "For the Logos, perceiving that the corruption of man could be undone in no other way than by death as a necessary condition (49), - while it was impossible for the Logos to die, since He was immortal and Son of the Father - for this end He takes to Himself a body capable of Death (50), that it, by participating (51) in the Logos who is above all, might become worthy to die in the stead of all, and might, because of the Logos which dwelt in it, remain incorruptible, and that henceforth corruption might be stayed for all by the grace of the Resurrection. Hence, by offering unto death the body He Himself had taken, as an offering or sacrifice free from stain (52), straightway He put away death from those

(46)  $\alphaὐτὸ πᾶντων αὐτὸ θανάτῳ παραδίδου$ . For the last word see K. Barth Ch. Dog. Vol. II, Pt. II:461 and 481f. for the startling observation that it is the word for both Judas's betrayal and the handing on of the Apostolic preaching.

(47)  $\ὡς πᾶντων ἐν αὐτῷ ἀποθάνοντων$ .

(48)  $\tauῇ τοῦ σώματος ἰδιοποιήσει$  - Montfaucon: corpore quod sibi assumpsit. Robertson: "by the appropriation of His body" is much more ambiguous. The reference, implied in the Greek and explicit in the Latin (in spite of any temptation to push Transsubstantiation) is not on our appropriation of Christ but on the Logos taking the body and making it His, i.e. on the Incarnation as a whole.

(49)  $\deltaιὰ τοῦ πάντως ἀποθάνειν$ . (50)  $\tauὸ δυνάμενον ἀποθάνειν ἑαυτῷ ἑμῶν$ . (51)  $\muεταλάβον$ . This would again be Platonistic participation.

(52)  $\ὡς ἱερεῖον καὶ θῶμα πάντος ἐλεύθερον$ .



Himself, and makes it His very own as an instrument, being manifested in it, and dwelling in it ~~the~~. And thus, taking from our own sphere a body like our own ( $\tauὸ ὁμοίον$ ), because all were under the penalty ( $\delta\pi\epsilon\upsilon\thetaύνους$  + gen.) of the corruption of death He gave it over to death instead of all (46), and offered it to the Father - doing it moreover of His loving-kindness ( $\phiιλανθρωπῶς$ ), so that, firstly, all being held to have died in Him (47), the law involving the ruin of man might be undone - inasmuch as its power ( $\epsilonἰςουσιάζει$ ) had been fully spent in the Lord's ( $\kappaυριακῶ$ ) body, and no longer had any place against men like Him, and that, secondly, whereas men had turned towards corruption, He might turn them back towards incorruption and quicken them from death by the appropriation of the body (48) and the grace of the Resurrection...".

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(46) ἀντὶ πάντων αὐτὸ θανάτῳ παραδίδουσι. For the last word see K. Barth Ch. Dog. Vol. II, Pt. II:461 and 481f. for the startling observation that it is the word for both Judas's betrayal and the handing on of the Apostolic preaching.

(47) ὥς πάντων ἐν αὐτῷ ἀποθάνοντων.

(48) τῇ τοῦ σώματος ἰδιόποιήσει - Montfaucon: corpore quod sibi assumpserat. Robertson: "by the appropriation of His body" is much more ambiguous. The reference, implied in the Greek and explicit in the Latin (in spite of any temptation to push Transsubstantiation) is not on our appropriation of Christ but on the Logos taking the body and making it His, i.e. on the Incarnation as a whole.

(49) διὰ τοῦ πάντως ἀποθάνειν. (50) τὸ δυνάμενον ἀποθάνειν ἑαυτῷ συμβῆναι, σῶμα. (51) μετὰ λάβον. This would again be Platonistic participation.

(52) ὥς ἱερεῖον καὶ θῶμα πάντος ἑλευθερῶν



like Him by offering an equivalent (κατάλληλον). For being over all, the Logos of God, fittingly, by offering His own temple and corporal instrument (53) for the life of all, satisfied the debt (54) by His death. And thus He, the incorruptible Son of God, being conjoined with all by a like nature, fittingly clothed all with the incorruption by the promise of the Resurrection. For the actual corruption in death no longer has place against men, by reason of the Logos, which by His one body has come to dwell among them (55)...(even as a visit from a powerful king keeps marauders away)...For now that He has come into our realm and taken up His abode in one body among His peers, henceforth the whole conspiracy of the enemy against mankind is checked, and the corruption of death which before prevailed against them is done away...

10 ... (Even as a king must defend one of his cities from attackers even in the event of the inhabitants' negligence)...much more did the Logos of the All-Good Father not neglect the race of men, His work, as it was descending to corruption; but, while He blotted out the death which had ensued by the offering of His own body, He corrected their neglect by His own teaching, restoring all that was man's by His own power...(II Cor. 5:14 and Heb. 2:9 quoted)...Then He also points out why it was necessary for none other than the Logos of God Himself to become man (ἐνανθρωπήσαι)...(quotes Heb. 2:10)...in saying this he means that it belonged to none other to bring back man from the corruption which had begun, than the (Logos of God, Who had made them from the beginning.) And to the fact that it was in order to sacrifice for bodies such as His own (56) that the Logos Himself also assumed (ἔλαβεν) a body, they also refer in these

{53} νῆδον καὶ τὸ σωματικὸν ὄργανον.

{54} ἐπλήρου τὸ δφειλόμενον, i.e. fully paid the debt. The former word exactly duplicates the Anselmic "satisfactio" even in etymology, and the latter has the same relation to Anselm's "debitum" = debt.

{55} διὰ τὸν ἐνοικήσαντα λόγον ἐν τούτοις διὰ τοῦ ἐνὸς σώματος.

{56} περὶ τῶν ὁμοίων σωμάτων.



words...(Heb. 2:14-15)... For by the sacrifice of His own body, He both put an end to the law which was against us, and made a new beginning of life for us, by the hope of the Resurrection which He has given us. (For since it was from man that death prevailed over men, therefore conversely by the Logos of God being made man (57) has come about the destruction of death and the resurrection of life...(I cor. 15:21-22)... For no longer do we die as subject to condemnation, but as men who arise from the dead do we await the general resurrection of all..." >

This is the conclusion of what Athanasius later calls the first reason for the Incarnation, and it is concerned mainly with what was later called Justification, the centre of interest being the Cross. We have already called attention to the resemblances and differences between his treatment of the issue and Anselm's, to the advantage of the latter, and these chapters confirm these. The position of Athanasius is quite definitely penal, insofar as the notion can be applied at all. Man has sinned and let corruption gain access to him; the penalty is - more and worse sin and corruption, culminating inexorably in death in the most ruinous sense (58). It was the purpose and the glorious work of the Logos to come among us and deliver us from this fate by taking the penalty Himself (59). But in relation to this, it is unfortunate that,

(57) διὰ τῆς ἐνανθρώπου τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου.

(58) Failure to understand this is responsible for the statement of Atzberger, op. cit. p. 159, "...dass Athanasius mit der Strafe der Sünde nicht recht Ernst zu machen scheint", which he attributes to Platonist influence. Pell, op. cit. 74-5, criticising this very statement of Atzberger, says the truth, that it neglects the fact "dass nach der Gesamtauffassung des Athanasius das Wesen der Sünde auch schon das Wesen der Strafe für die Sünde sei" each being separation from God, which is what spiritual death means for Athanasius.

(59) Athanasius taught a representative death of Christ, "einen stellvertretenden Tod Christi", Möhler, "Athanasius der Grosse und die Kirche seiner Zeit...", p. 151. The wisest remarks of Harnack on Athanasius are on this subject. See Hist. Dogm. (E.T. Vol III, p. 308) on the importance of the penal aspect of Athanasius's doctrine. When discussing Anselm (op. cit. Vol. VI:p. 55) he says that, previously "only Athanasius spoke with noteworthy clearness of the penal suffering which Christ took from us and laid upon Himself". On the other hand, the alleged contrast which op. cit. VI: 73, he makes between the subject of reconciliation being God in Athanasius and Man (ie. the Humanity of Christ) in Anselm, is quite wrong; see McIntyre op. cit. passim, particularly on the "ascent" of God, that is, the fact that God is essentially the self-acting Agent, and its importance throughout the whole of Anselm's "Cur Deus Homo". See esp. the last paragraph of the book, and also, by contrast, pp. 197-99.



words...(Heb. 2:14-15)... For by the sacrifice of His own body, He both put an end to the law which was against us, and made a new beginning of life for us, by the hope of the Resurrection which He has given us. (For since it was from man that death prevailed over men, therefore conversely by the Logos of God being made man (57) has come about the destruction of death and the resurrection of life...(1 cor. 15:21-22)... For no longer do we die as subject to condemnation, but as men who arise from the dead do we await the general resurrection of all..."

This is the conclusion of what Athanasius later calls the first reason for the Incarnation, and it is concerned mainly with what was later called Justification, the centre of interest being the Cross. We have already called attention to the resemblances and differences between his treatment of the issue and Anselm's, to the advantage of the latter, and these chapters confirm these. The position of Athanasius is quite definitely penal, insofar as the notion can be applied at all. Man has sinned and let corruption gain access to him; the penalty is - more and worse sin and corruption, culminating inexorably in death in the most ruinous sense (58). It was the purpose and the glorious work of the Logos to come among us and deliver us from this fate by taking the penalty Himself (59). But in relation to this, it is unfortunate that,

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through his inability to make sense of the notion of the Logos suffering in any way that would not be blasphemous, or to see any aetiological ground why the Logos must, as such, suffer, in the Anselmic way, Athanasius declines from the level reached at the end of ch. 7, where, directly confronted with Scriptural truth, he says in so many words that the Logos must suffer on our behalf (60). In these chapters, he has to use language which rightly excites the suspicion of Hoss, Stülcken and ~~Raven~~, that his Christology is virtually Apollinarian. This is the soteriological equivalent of the tendency that we have noticed earlier, (of correlating the Body with Appearance and the Pure Logos with Reality in a Platonic sense. Here, Athanasius definitely says that the Logos could neither die nor suffer at all, and therefore the dying and suffering had to be endured by the body, which He "gives over" to death. Admittedly, he "makes it His own", but it is as a "temple", and something which He "takes"; Athanasius appears to balk at the exact language of John 1:14: *ὁ Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο*. Thus, in this field, there appears to be an almost 100% correlation between the Logos and action, and the body and passion, respectively. (And once again we notice that Athanasius was evidently not ready for the full Chalcedonian Christology, in that the Logos, and action, appear to be entirely correlated with what the Chalcedonians later termed the *σπουδαί* of Christ, and the body, and passion, with what they later termed the *φύσις*, as distinct from the use of that Greek word in ch. 1.) There are at least three serious difficulties here. In the first place, if suffering is to mean anything at all, it must in some way penetrate to and involve the very heart of the personal being of the sufferer. Athanasius does notice this difficulty and later, in chs. 18-19, tries to get around it, without complete success. The second difficulty is one which Western theology has always felt much more strongly than the East, that is, that no human suffering

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(60) See above, footnote (54).



has, in the long run, any redemptive possibility at all. Of course, one may answer that this is just the point at issue with Athanasius.

3. But the third danger is in some respects the worst of all. On this basis, if the penal aspect of the Atonement means anything at all, it means that the Logos treated the body of Christ in the way that the "Law" treats a criminal who is capitally sentenced, which is what Athanasius meant when he says that the Logos "gave the body over to death". The Greek Church, with its non-juridical outlook, was protected from the the worst results of this soteriology. But what would be the result of transplanting this sort of soteriology into the Western Church, which has always given far more place to forensic concepts, and where the conception of Christian life as an "imitatio Christi" was, again in contrast to the East, strongly established? The answer is, patently, asceticism in its most extreme, dualistic forms, up to and including the mediaeval flagellant sects. It is true, again, that Athanasius himself was protected from the worst results of this theology by the fact that all his subsequent works were about Trinitarian and Christological issues, and, in the "Contra Arianos", where he treats of the same material again, the basis of his theology has already somewhat changed, with more emphasis on the active, as distinct from the passive, suffering, humanity of Christ. Perhaps, too, the older concept of the Θεωπνευσίς of man, at its naïve worst, for that very reason was an additional protection. But what if Athanasius had actually written a work entitled "The life of the Christian Man in Christ"? Our direct knowledge is very scanty, but perhaps we can see in the Christology of the "De Incarnatione" one factor in the rise of the ascetic movement in Egypt and Syria, so nearly contemporary.

Thus, for Anselm, it is in some sense both as God and Man that Christ dies and is raised again. He, in order to answer the question of how a debt is to be repaid that is not only infinite but in a sense co-infinite with God, has to allow, however, uncertainly, for a suffering of



God which is not externally caused but teleologically directed by God Himself. Athanasius could not reach this conception yet. Then, what part did the presence of the Logos play in the theology of Athanasius? One reason which was undoubtedly in the mind of Athanasius, but which is not quite explicitly expressed, was that the Logos may exercise His creative activity in a close and intimate way. But the main explicit reason is so as to sanctify the body and render it suitable for its sacrificial function, in the sense that the priest sees that the sacrificial animal is free from blemishes. The Person of the Trinity most directly associated with sanctification has always been the Holy Spirit, and in one sense this may be regarded as another aspect of a function of the Spirit being taken over by the Logos in default. But on the other hand this is best regarded as another aspect of sanctification which we ignore at our peril. The Holy Spirit, and therefore all its operations, proceeds not only from the Father but from the Son. Our sanctification in the Spirit is only valid and efficacious insofar as we share in the sanctification of the Humanity of Christ which was first made by the presence of the Logos Himself. This does show the extreme significance of sanctification for Athanasius, and for Greek theology as a whole, and the fact that it obtrudes itself in fields which, for the average Westerner, are exclusively concerned with justification. The third reason for the actual presence of the Logos was to keep corruption, at its worst, away, by a simple repulsive effect. This corresponds to salvation as being by a mighty act, the traditional Kingly office of Christ; the above has, in the main, been concerned with the Priestly office. The classical <sup>Prophetic</sup> office of Christ is not yet stressed; it comes up in the next section,



where the revelatory activity of Christ is treated (61). But already Athanasius does mention the likeness of men to the Incarnate Christ, and this is a beginning of a revival of the old doctrine of Paul and Irenaeus that Christ in His Humanity is the *Ἀνακεφαλαιώσις*, Recapitulation, Summation of the New Humanity (62). It is surprising in a way that Athanasius at this stage gives much less emphasis to this doctrine than, say, Irenaeus, but the reason is that the first effect of the revived sense of the distinction between Creator and creature was to inhibit the sense of the active as distinct from the passive humanity of Christ. It was not until the Arian controversy that Athanasius began to develop once again a doctrine of the active humanity of Christ.

As far as the human appropriation of grace is concerned, the principal field is justification, but sanctification plays an important part, too. The third element, the calling in hope of the Christian, is not nearly so strong; in fact, it never is in Athanasius. It is mentioned at the end of ch. 10, the hope of resurrection, and also at the end of ch. 8, the grace of the resurrection. This element is rather something that suffuses the whole of theology in Athanasius; if it is mentioned in any more systematic and regular way, it is as a sort of addendum at the end. As such, once again it tends to be associated

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(61) Atzberger, while usually very shrewd, is in general too committed to Latin theology to understand fully, and - most important of all - to obtain full value from, a Greek theologian who is nevertheless prepared to do full justice to what later became the characteristic Western interests, from his own different point of view. This, to be fair to Atzberger, is a very common failing, and it makes for staleness in theology. However, this feature saves him from the worst tendency of all, to treat Athanasius purely as the supreme orthodox theologian, and his criticism of Athanasius's tendency to subsume all the aspects of the work or office of Christ under the sheer Mighty Act of God is worth noting with respect: (op. cit. p. 229) "In dem Werke Christi selbst tritt seine Lehramtliche Thätigkeit zu wenig als eine selbstständige hervor, indem sie zu sehr auf seine eigentlich königliche zurückgeführt wird... (ie. especially in the earlier writings the later writings are better.)... Das Gleiche gilt insoferne für Christi hohenpriesterliche Thätigkeit, als er die Kraft seines Opfers zu sehr seiner göttlichen Macht und zu wenig seinem leidenden Gehorsam zuschreibt".

Of course, one reason for this is that Athanasius is throughout this whole section considering the Incarnation actiologically, and therefore as the Act or prospective Act, and as such, it is God's; this is intended in the same sense exactly as the Anhypostasias of the Person of Christ.

(62) I Cor. 15:22. See Iren. Adv. Haereses, esp. Book V.



with the general sanctification, the destruction of the force of corruption, rather than anything specifically eschatological in the usual sense. Admittedly, it appears to be normal in theology to adopt one or other method or a combination of both, but the author is not happy about this.

One last point must be mentioned; the Person of the Trinity who was the Agent in creating the Body of Christ was the Logos and the Logos alone. This is in pointed contrast with the formulae of the "Apostles" and the Nicaeano-Constantinopolitan Creeds, with their "conceived by the Holy Ghost". This is also in contrast with Irenaeus, who however is concerned to rebut Gnostic errors. In this respect, Athanasius follows the Apologists, especially Justin, who maintained that the Scriptural references to the part played by the Spirit in the conception of the man Jesus really referred to the Logos (63). As Justin is the classical exponent par excellence of the so-called Logos-Christology, this is the most obvious case of all of a work of the Spirit being attributed to the Logos under the influence of the Logos Christology.

11 In this and the following chapters, Athanasius discusses what may be called the second reason for the Incarnation, Revelation of Divine truth and the correction of error. This corresponds closely to the classical Prophetic function of Christ; of the three classical modes of reconciliation, the chief emphasis is probably again on Sanctification, although it does not fit very well into any of the three. The atmosphere here is much closer to that of the "Contra Gentes", and it is inevitably less Scriptural, with greater loopholes for natural theology. "God, Who has the power over all things, when He was making the human race through His own Logos, seeing the weakness of their nature ( $\phiύσιν$ ), that it was not sufficient of itself to know its Maker, nor to get any idea ( $ἐννοίαν$ )

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(63) Cf. Justin, Apol. I:ch. 33, and by contrast Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. Book III:17:1.



at all of God, because while He is Unoriginate (ἀγένητον), the creatures have been made ex nihilo, and while He was incorporeal, men had been fashioned in a lower way in the body (64), and because in every way the things made fell short of being able to comprehend and know their Maker - taking pity, I say, on the human race...He did not leave them destitute of the knowledge of Himself...For what profit to the creatures if they know not their Maker? Or how could they be rational (65) without knowing the Logos of the Father, in whom they received their very being (66)? For there would be nothing to distinguish them even from brutes (ἀλόγων) if they had nothing but knowledge of earthly things...Whence...He gives them a share in His own Image, our Lord Jesus Christ, and makes them after His own Image and likeness (67), so that, by grace perceiving the Image, that is, the Logos of the Father, they may be able to get an idea (ἐννοίαν) of the Father through Him, and, knowing their Maker, live the happy and truly blessed life...But, men once more in their perversity having set at naught, in spite of this, the grace given them (68),...(they fell into sin and idolatry as described in the "Contra Gentes")...Thus...everything was full of irreligion and lawlessness, and God alone and His Logos were unknown, albeit He had not hidden Himself out of men's sight, nor given the knowledge of Himself in one way only, but had, on the contrary, unfolded it to them in many forms and by many ways (69).

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- {64} κατὰ τοῦ σώματος  
 {65} λογικοὶ - once again the pun on rationality, and the Logos Himself.  
 {66} ἐν ᾧ καὶ γεγενῆσιν  
 {67} τῆς ἰδίας εἰκόνος αὐτοῦ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μεταδίδωσι καὶ ποιεῖ τούτους κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ εἰκόνα καὶ καθ' ὁμοίωσιν.  
 {68} καθολικῶς πάντες καὶ οὕτω τῆς δοθείσης αὐτοῖς χάριτος  
 {69} οὐδὲ ἀπλὴν τὴν περὶ αὐτοῦ γινώσκιν αὐτοῖς δεδοκώς, ἀλλὰ καὶ ποικίλως καὶ διὰ πολλῶν αὐτὴν ἐφαιπλώσας.  
 This pointedly poises the issue of a multiplicity of ways of knowing God.



12

"For whereas the grace of the Divine Image was in itself sufficient to make known God the Logos, and through Him the Father, still God, knowing the weakness of men, made provision even for their carelessness, so that, if they did not care to know God for themselves, they might be enabled through the works of creation to avoid ignorance of their Maker. But since men's carelessness little by little descends to lower things, God made provision, once more, even for this weakness of theirs, by sending a Law, and prophets, men such as they knew, so that even if they were not ready to look up to heaven and know their Creator, they might have instruction from those near at hand. For men are able to learn from <sup>men</sup> more directly about higher things. So it was open to them, by looking into the height of heaven and understanding the harmony of creation, to know its Ruler, the Logos of God, Who, by His own providence over all things, makes known the Father to all, and to this end moves all things, that through Him all might know God. Or, if this were too much for them, it was possible for them to meet at least the holy men, and through them to learn of God, the Maker of all things, the Father of Christ, and to learn that the worship of idols is godlessness and all impiety. Or it was open to them, by knowing the Law even, to cease from all lawlessness and live a virtuous life...(The Law was not for the Jews alone, but they were)...for all the world a holy school of the knowledge of God and the conduct of the soul (70)...(but)...men nevertheless, overcome by the pleasures of the moment, and by the illusions and deceits sent by demons, did not raise their heads towards the truth, but loaded themselves the more with evils and sins, so as no longer to seem rational (λογικούς), but from their ways to be reckoned irrational (ἄλογους).

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"So then, men having thus become brutalized (71)...what was God to do?...And what was the use of men having been made originally in God's

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(70) τῆς περὶ Θεοῦ γνώσεως καὶ τῆς κατὰ ψυχὴν πολιτείας.  
 (71) ἀλογωθέντων.



Image? For it would have been better for him to have been made  $\omega\varsigma$   $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omega\nu$  than, once ~~material~~ rational, for him to live the life of brutes (72)".

This is the aetiological, and as such, the most significant part of the Revelational section. [The argument is, that Man, being created in the Image of God, can, or should be able to, see God simply in virtue of this fact. There is only one Image, there being no differentiation between the  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\kappa\omega\nu$  and the  $\delta\mu\omega\iota\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$  (Similitude) (73). It is significant that

(72)  $\gamma\epsilon\nu\delta\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$   $\lambda\omicron\gamma\iota\kappa\acute{\omicron}\nu$   $\tau\eta\nu$   $\tau\acute{\omega}\nu$   $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omega\nu$   $\beta\iota\omicron\upsilon\nu$ .

(73) For an exhaustive study of the question of the Image of God in Athanasius, see R. Bernard, "L'Image de Dieu d'après Saint Athanase". Earlier writers, before Athanasius, in particular Clement of Alexandria and Origen, differentiated between the two terms in Gen. 1:26 LXX, treating the  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\kappa\omega\nu$  as a lower level and the  $\delta\mu\omega\iota\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$  as a higher supernatural level which is liable to be lost (pp. 25-31 and refces.). Athanasius did not make this distinction. His doctrine is intimately related to Participation, in the Logos (pp. 31-39), the state of being  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\iota\kappa\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ , (39-42), and grace (43-47). On the Image in relation to sin, fall, and redemption (47-56), he comes to a conventional conclusion, (51-2: Considéré comme le don de la grace, le  $\kappa\alpha\tau'\epsilon\acute{\iota}\kappa\omega\nu$  est perdu; envisagé comme inhérent à l'ame, il n'est qu'obscurci, recouvert d'éléments étrangers. Il y a une imprécision de l'anthropologie de Saint Athanase...) (Origen on the contrary said that the Image could be obscured but not lost; P. Arch. IV:4:9. Hom. in Gen. XIII:4).

The main contention of the whole work cited here above is that there is a clear differentiation between the "Contra Gentes" and "De Incarnatione", in which the Image is considered from the point of view of man, that is, in an upward direction, and the anti-Arian writings, in which the Image is considered from the point of view of God, and then only of man. It is true that the downward direction is much more universal and predominant in the latter writings, but the fact that Athanasius here says uncompromisingly that the Image of God IS in the most literal sense Christ or rather the Logos indicates that the downward direction of thought is very pronounced here. In this regard the "De Incarnatione" is midway between the "Contra Gentes" and the anti-Arian writings.

J. B. Berchem, "Le Role du Verbe dans L'Oeuvre de la Création et la Sanctification d'après Saint Athanase", Angelicum 1938 pp. 201-232, is mainly on the Image of God, and gives a similar account, but accepts too uncritically the idea that there is a clear division as yet between a natural image, representing the created state as God made man, and the supernatural Image, which is a participation in the Logos.

For a historical study of the question of the Imago, see Barth, Ch. Dogm. III:I, esp. pp. 192-204. Incidentally it is not true that Barth denies any remnant at all of the Image of God. The final proof is that in C. Dogm. Vol. IV he can only give his account of man the sinner in terms of taking Christ and negating it, and in this sense there is a remnant of the Image in the most fallen man. The author completely and unreservedly accepts this as the solution to what has been a difficult and acrimonious problem.



the Image of God has its chief context in the field of natural theology, or the knowledge of God; it is clear that for Athanasius the capacity to know and see God depended on a fundamental analogy between God and man; also, vice versa, that the characteristic effect of the Image is in the field of Divine knowledge and contemplation(74). There is throughout this section a very close parallelism with the section on the judicial wrath of God; creation in the Image corresponds to the Law that God gave man which he broke in the Garden of Eden; contemplation of God in virtue of the Image corresponds to life in peace and beatitude; man's misuse of His own soul, which is the variety of sin in which the "Contra Gentes" is principally interested corresponds to the Fall of Man in Gen. 3, as correctly interpreted; man's loss of "rationality" and his inability to see God, in particular the Logos, corresponds to man's subjection to the Law of sin and death. Much of this has been already discussed in the "Contra Gentes"; what has actually happened is that what in the earlier book is the sole form of sin in which interest is taken (75), now appears as one of the two main aspects of it. In terms of the Barthian schema of sin, it is still essentially Barth's second form, sin as foolery. However, there is one aspect that demands further attention, since it is here treated more thoroughly, and that is natural theology. On the face of it, Athanasius appears to repeat the contention of the "Contra Gentes" on the matter, treated rather more fully in the Scriptural context. There appear to be

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(74) See for example (Liberal Prot.) Harnack, H. Dogm. (F.T.) Vol. III, pp. 289-295, and (R.C.) Bouyer, "L'Incarnation et l'Eglise-Corps du Christ, dans la Théologie de Saint Athanase", p. 37, for the importance of this right knowledge as a communication of grace. However, Harnack, loc. cit. 294-5, sounds a caution against interpreting knowledge in a too intellectual way, although he interprets it according to his own theory of the Greek theologians believing in the quasi-medicinal impartation of the Divine Nature.

(75) See "Contra Gentes", virtually passim.



four ways of knowing God, or rather three ways apart from the Incarnation and its direct consequences. (They are, in order, the direct vision of the human soul, certain deduction from the nature of created reality, revelation through such methods as the Law and the Prophets, then and only then the Incarnation.) They appear to be arranged in a sort of descending order of, if one may say so, delicacy; the best way, which works with man in his perfection, is direct vision, and the others correspond to increasing states of degeneration and the sort of measures which this condition progressively imposes. The Incarnation, by implication, is at the end of this series, corresponding to the fact that none of the other methods could work. Incidentally, the statement of Athanasius that the Law and Prophets were a sacred school meant for the whole world is, in a way, better than the famous statement of Clement of Alexandria that Greek philosophy and Hebrew Scripture were both, for their own people, schoolmasters unto Christ (76), but in another way it is inferior, since the Old Testament is not explicitly related to Christ in Athanasius, but for the moment seems to have independent validity. It appears, then, that he is sanctifying a number of inferior ways of Divine knowledge, including natural theology in its normal sense.

It must not be ignored that much can be said in defence of Athanasius against this charge, especially if we compare these chapters with the corresponding sections of the "Contra Gentes", compared to which they are much more strictly Scripturally orientated. He affirms that, as a matter of brute fact, all the apparently better means failed, and in fact the Incarnation is the only way left. And, now that the notion of the soul's direct vision, intellection, and sensing of God is presented in this more Scriptural context and especially in the context of the accomplished Fall of Man, it could be rightly rejoined that this was the Biblical state of the unfallen Adam, and that even though we now see through

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(76) Strenata, Book I, Ch. 5, near beginning, and almost passim.



a glass darkly, the day will surely come when, then and for all eternity, we shall see face to face. (Again, the very ability of the soul to see God depends on the creation of man in the image of God; this image of God is stated categorically to be the Logos, that is, the Pre-Incarnate Second Person, or in another place, Christ, which would refer to the Incarnate Christ, so that in some sense the Christocentric basis of all right theology is maintained even here.) It is maintained in this sense even in the weakest part of this section, the Argument from Design, to the extent that it refers to the Second Person of the Trinity, however He may have been conceived in this case. Finally, there is a significant change for the better in the treatment of sin; turning aside from God is presented as sinful, not so much in itself, as a contemptuous defiance of grace which He has offered.

However, the fact remains that Athanasius, even if he did so in an extensive and goodly company, took insufficient precautions against natural theology. In the first place, the Bible knows nothing of the Argument from Design as a principal means of knowing God, alongside the Law and Prophets, the Incarnation, and the initial and final state of beatitude. At most, it plays only a very small part, and the Old Testament goes almost straight from the Fall to the Covenants, explicitly those of Noah and Abraham. It is easy enough for us to see that anyone who knew the world and had no independent knowledge of God would have no firm reason for belief in God, and the fact that this argument occurs where it does in the chapters in question, and as part of the series in question, even throws a certain suspicion on the way in which Athanasius even now conceives the soul's direct sensing of God. But there is an even more dangerous aspect, which is in fact the kernel of the natural theology question, and which has probably never been expressed quite clearly, even by Karl Barth (77).<sup>1</sup> Every respectable Christian theologian

(77) For this reason, the sort of statement that is commonly made, eg. Barthelemy, op.cit. p. 205, that only a Christian could make sense of the natural theology of the "Contra Gentes", is dangerously beside the point.



understands that the unredeemed sinner is incapable of knowing God of himself, in any manner worthy of the name. The real question is, Can the redeemed person know God in this way? In other words, does the work of Christ give us an unlimited licence to practise natural theology? This is the almost instinctive view, it seems, of most of the critics of Karl Barth, especially in the English-speaking world; they feel that to deny a man this right would deny the efficacy of his salvation. What Barth is really saying is that not even a saved man has any such right in this age; in the world to come, natural theology will be unnecessary anyway. When we look at the matter in this light, we cannot avoid the unfortunate conclusion that Athanasius has left himself open here; while he does not draw any such conclusion in so many words, it would be naturally drawn from what Athanasius did say, especially as it has not been explicitly excluded.

The ultimate reason, of course, for this wavering is the continuing influence of the older Logos doctrine, (with its tendency to equate the Second Person of the Trinity with the rationality that is allegedly the differentia of man, and/or the rationality that is empirically observable or rationally intelligible in the universe;) this is also linked up with the combination of the notion of "deification" as a description of the Atonement and the instrumentalist doctrine of the Humanity of Christ which is essentially passive in character. Later, in the "Contra Arianos", all these positions are reversed; the Logos is definitely correlated with the Father in fact and not merely in theory, and we find once again a doctrine of the active Humanity of Christ; this is not to mention the awful warnings of the Arian controversy itself. The result is that we begin to find natural theology attacked (78), or at any rate unmistakable signs of a change in this direction. But a really systematic and conclusive attack on natural theology is the product of yet

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(78) See, eg. C. Ar. II:41:233B beginning, and below pp. 856-8 for explanation of how it applies.



further theological developments; an adequate doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the Procession of the Holy Spirit from both the Father and the Son, so that all the works of the Spirit are rigorously conformed to those of the Son, the Holy Spirit as playing the primary role in this age between the Two Advents, an understanding that in this age man is still in measure tried by evil and still has to walk by faith and not by sight, and finally a full sense of the insidious character of sin. Under these circumstances we are still absolutely debarred from natural theology, for the overwhelming reason that any attempt would inevitably adulterate Christian truth with our own human sin. Athanasius was the pioneer in the fourth century revival of the Doctrine of the Spirit, but the other factors that we have just mentioned are, and remain, the weakest points in his theology; in fact they have always been essentially Western rather than Eastern. It is no accident either that the Reformers and Barthians are Westerners, since the Scripture principle is, in one view, the proper form of the "Filioque"; conversely, the idea that the Christian has the right to practise natural theology and that the work of Christ has its essential goal in releasing him from these and similar inhibitions, exactly corresponds to the procession of the Spirit from the Father alone, through the Son but not from the Son. Now, it is now rightly accepted as a commonplace of theological history that the old Logos doctrine, that is the Logos in general, the Logos apart from what specially concerned the Incarnation, attributed the functions of the Spirit to the Logos. [Thus the Logos outside the Incarnation was the exact systematic equivalent, de facto, of the Holy Spirit, and therefore necessarily the Spirit as proceeding from the Father alone.] We shall have occasion to show that Athanasius remained in the circle formed by this sort of outlook for the whole of his theological life, so that his position in this matter is not surprising here (79). The most serious

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(79) See below, p. 1249-56.



results were again masked by the fact that Athanasius never wrote a work which was specifically about the appropriation of grace or the life of the Christian man.

Having discussed the parlous state of man through loss of the vision of God, Athanasius once again affirms (ch. 13:117C- 120A) that God had to take exceptional measures to safeguard both His goodness and His consistency, which would be affronted by any other response; this section is exactly analogous with the corresponding section on the law of sin and death. Having said this, he continues (at 120B) that what is necessary is nothing less than the reconstruction of man according to the Image of God: "What then was God to do? Or what was to be done, save the renewing of that which was in God's Image (80), so that by it men might once more be able to know Him? But how could this come to pass unless the Image of God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, was present? For it was impossible through men, since they are but made κατ' εἰκόνα, nor by angels either, since not even they are God's images. Whence the Logos of God came in His own Person (δι' ἑαυτοῦ), so that, as He was the Image of the Father, He might be able to recreate man after the image. But again it could not have taken place had not death and corruption been done away. Whence...He took a mortal body, that, while death might in it be once and for all done away, men made after the Image might once more be renewed. None other was sufficient then for this need, save the Image of the Father".

14 (In the same way, when a portrait is defaced, it can be renewed only in the presence and proximity of the original.  
120C-D

Here we have final confirmation that the Image of God is essentially Christ and nothing else. As for men being "made in the Image", Athanasius has neither the time nor the inclination for a scholastic theological disquisition on the exact meaning of this phrase and especially

(80) τὸ κατ' εἰκόνα πάλιν ἀναγεῖν.



the preposition; it is a stock phrase, established in Scripture, and that is all. One thing strongly suggested, however, is that "in the Image" means "in Christ", in the Pauline sense, or at any rate "in the Logos". On the basis of this, it would be obviously necessary for Christ to come, so as to draw all men into Him (to change the preposition). On the other hand, there is still the suggestion of the metaphor of Image, in its ordinary meaning. In this case, it might appear at first sight purely that there is less error involved, all told, in making a copy if the original itself is present, than if the copy is made from something that is itself a copy. (But it appears that, for Athanasius, there is not only a relative but an absolute impossibility of remaking man in the Image of God without the direct presence of the Logos.) This makes it likely that Athanasius is using the analogy, not of an artist making a copy of a picture on a surface that may be continuous with the picture copied, but of the process of stamping a coin, seal, gramophone record or other similar impression. This involves the making of the original; from this is stamped the matrix which cannot be considered as the original, since it is negative with regard to the original, that is, depressions on the original are elevations on the matrix, and vice versa, and in the other dimensions the matrix is the mirror image of the original. However, when the matrix is used to stamp the final products, they are in the same way negative with regard to the matrix, and therefore genuine duplicates with regard to the original. This process was certainly completely familiar to Athanasius. Of course, he could not use the analogy in any way so as to introduce the idea that the Logos or Christ, as the "Image of God", is "negative" with regard to the Father on one hand, and the Christian man on the other, and in his later theology, of course, this would conflict with the necessity of



stating that the Logos is the ἀπαλλάκτος εἰκὼν (81) of the Father - but it is to be noted that this stamping and sealing analogy retires into the background. But it is not too much to suggest that Athanasius had this property of image-reversal in mind, and meant it to be recognised by his readers, at least as an analogy of the fact that there was necessarily a Mediator between God and Man, and that there was an absolute and not a relative impossibility for the refashioning of man to be carried out without this intermediate stage. Finally, this metaphor of sealing was revived in the Epistles to Serapion, this time with reference to the Spirit (82). In one sense, this is simply a return to the usage of the earlier Church (83), but, in another sense, as we shall see, it represents the fruit of Athanasius's new emphasis on the Humanity of Christ. Here, patently Christ is the positive original, the Spirit is the intermediate stage, and the Christian is the final stage. This will be further considered when the time comes. But in general, it is highly probable that Athanasius did regard the stamping and image metaphors in this way, and besides, this would have the advantage of analogically pointing to the necessity of a Mediator in such a way as to avoid the τρίτος argument (84).

Athanasius now (at 14:121A) returns again to the inadequacy of man in his fallen state to recognise the True God in the harmony of creation. Here again, Athanasius in effect excludes natural theology as a possibility for fallen man, without being quite rigorous enough with

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(81) What is excluded here by this Greek expression, which was popular among the centre parties during the controversy and enshrined in the Lucianic Creed. (See Newman's notes on De Decr. 20, De Syn. 23 and also De Syn. 38; also under ἀπαλλάκτος in Vol II of Newman's "Select Treatises of St. Athanasius in Controversy with the Arians", 1881 (pp. 370-373) is any alteration or distortion analogous eg. to the change in the proportions of a shadow as the sun changes position. Cf. James, 1:17, and our expression, "parallax error".

(82) I:23-4.

(83) See G.W.H. Lampe, "The seal of the Spirit" for a historical account of the Spirit as the Seal.

(84) For a recognition of the importance of the difference between Christ as the Image, and men as κατ'εἰκόνα see Demetropoulos, Ἡ ἈΝΘΡΩΠΙΝΗ ΛΟΓΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ἈΘΑΝΑΣΙΟΥ, p. 60.



regard to natural theology for the redeemed man. In addition, there is a passage (121B, beg.), which suggests that, for Athanasius, the primary activity of the Logos was what has been called "general revelation" rather than special revelation, general revelation, that is, as not merely potential, but actually occurring; "For He Who, by His own providence and ordering of all things was teaching men concerning the Father, He it was Who could renew this same teaching well".

The above section, being revelational, does not fit in very well with any of the three classical divisions of Reconciliation, Justification, Sanctification and Calling, in one sense. On the other hand, for Athanasius, revelation is very closely related to what is patently the total reconstruction and restoration of man according to the right pattern, and to this extent Sanctification is a very strong interest, and overwhelmingly predominates over the other two.

Having established the necessity for the Logos Himself to be present as the essential Agent of revelation, Athanasius now considers the nature of this revelation, or concretely, the works of Christ. Inevitably, the cardinal question is the relationship between Christ's deeds on earth, in the flesh, and the Deity and Humanity of Christ, as a whole. Even more to the point, it is the question of how the human deeds reveal the Deity of Christ, which is the same for Athanasius as how the corporeal can reveal completely the incorporeal God. Continuing ch. 14, at 121B end: "Whence...He sojourns here as man, taking to Himself a body like the others, and from the earthly things, that is, by the works of the body...(He teaches them)...so that they who do not know Him from His providence and rule over all things may even from the works done through His body itself know the Logos of God which is in the body (85), and through Him the Father.

15 "For as a kind teacher who cares for his pupils, and if some

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(85) ἐν τῷ σωματι.



cannot profit from higher subjects comes down to their level and teaches them entirely by simpler material, so also did the Logos of God...(I Cor. 1:21 quoted)...For seeing that men, having rejected the Contemplation (*θεωρίαν*) of God...and were seeking God in nature (86) and in sensory things,...the loving and general Saviour of all, the Logos of God, takes a body to Himself, and as man (*ὡς ἄνθρωπος*) walks among men, and meets half way (*προσλαμβάνει*) the senses of all, so that those who think that God is corporeal may from what the Lord effects through the works of the body perceive the truth, and through Him recognise the Father...if they looked with awe on creation, yet they saw how she confessed Christ as Lord; or if their mind was swayed towards men, so as to think them gods,...the Saviour alone among men appeared as Son of God, for there were no such works done in the case of the rest as had been done by God the Logos (87). Or if they were even biassed towards evil spirits, yet, seeing them cast out by the Lord, they were able to know that He alone, the Logos of God, was such, and not the demons. Or if their mind had sunk even to the dead, to worship heroes and the gods spoken of in the poets, yet, seeing the saviour's resurrection, they were to confess them as false gods, and that the Lord alone is true, the Logos of the Father, that was Lord even of death...

16 "For man's minds having fallen already to things of sense, *ὑπέβηκεν ἑαυτὸν διὰ σώματος φανῆναι ὁ Λόγος* (88), that He might, as man, transfer men to and centre their senses on Himself, and, men seeing Him henceforth as (*ὡς*) man, persuade them through the works He executed that He is not only man but also God and the True Logos and Wisdom of God... (Eph. 3:17b-19 quoted)...For by the Logos clarifying (*ἀπλωσάντος*) Himself everywhere, both above and beneath, in the depth and breadth, above in

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{86} *θενέσει*, i.e. the sphere of originate things.

{87} *παρὰ* + gen.

{88} For the translation of this portion, see below.



creation (89), beneath in becoming man (90), in the depth, in Hades, and in the breadth, in the world (91), all things have been filled with the knowledge of God. Now for this cause He also did not immediately upon His coming accomplish His sacrifice on behalf of all, by offering up His body to death and raising it again, for by this means He would have rendered Himself invisible. But He made Himself visible enough by what He did,...making Himself known no longer as man but as God the Logos (92). For by His becoming man the Saviour was to accomplish both works of love; first, in putting away death from us and renewing us again; secondly, being unseen and invisible, in manifesting and making Himself known by His works to be the Logos of the Father, and Ruler and King of the universe".

This passage is the first thorough and systematic account in Greek theology of the miracles of Christ in relation to His Person. Origen, of course, had had to discuss this matter, in C. Celsus, *passim*, and incidentally concluded that Christ had a human soul which was so intimately fused with the Logos as to form one entity (De Prin. II:VI and C. Cels. VI:47-48), in contrast with Athanasius, who so far completely correlates the humanity of Christ with the body. But in other respects Origen's treatment lacks definition compared with that of Athanasius, possibly because the latter's interest was more concentrated than that of Origen, who had to answer a systematic attack on the whole of Christianity. Since he is dealing with the miracles in the special context of revelation, he comes down definitely on the side of miracles as *σημεῖα*, signs, rather than as works of service or the first-fruits of the Messianic Kingdom. Although these last two aspects were not entirely out of Athanasius's mind, one would wish that they were more closely connected with the account of

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(89) εἰς τὴν κτίσιν  
 (90) εἰς τὴν ἐνανθρωπήσιν and so below also.  
 (91) εἰς τὸν κόσμον.  
 (92) μηκέτι ἄνθρωπον ἀλλὰ Θεὸν Λόγον.



the miracles. When this has been said, it must be admitted that this method of treatment has the advantage of keeping all these miracles-in-detail in their proper subordination to the Great Miracle of Christ, which was the giving of His life as a ransom for many, and the inauguration of the Kingdom.

More unfortunate is a related tendency of Athanasius, to treat the miracles as revelations of the simple Godhead of Christ, without them also being, to the same extent, revelations of God's reconciling purpose, that is, without them being regarded as showing that the Godhead of Christ has a character consistent with the Incarnation and proper to it. As Karl Barth has always maintained, even the Godhead Itself must be considered Christocentrically (93). On the other hand, Athanasius is still in the stage of his more metaphysical predecessors in regarding the cosmological and creative activity of the Logos as the essential form of His Deity. This is the only meaning that can be attached to the catena in ch. 16, where the Logos is known as God in various ways in various spheres; the way corresponding to "above", that is, in heaven, is "in creation". This must refer to the act or function of creation, since it is differentiated from εἰς πλάτος δὲ εἰς τὸν κόσμον, the fourth member. The Incarnation is correspondingly correlated with "beneath", i.e. the earthly realm. We shall show below that this one-sided cosmological emphasis in the doctrine of the Logos was a most dangerous factor in promoting Arianism. In any case, the miracles are treated very much as cosmological and creative miracles, both here and especially below in ch. 18, where they are discussed in detail, (and it is the Deity of Christ, so regarded, that is revealed rather than the whole of the Hypostatic Union of God and Man, as such.) We shall return to this when we consider chs. 18 and 19.

There are two lesser points that merit a little attention. At the beginning of ch. 15, it is said that the Logos came in the flesh to

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(93) See Ch. Dogm. Vol. II, Pt. I, passim.



accommodate to human prejudice, or more literally to meet it half way.

All well and good, but it shows how far the Church at the time had moved from its original Jewish environment; if there was one group of humanity which did not have a prejudice in favour of God manifesting Himself as man, it was the Jews of the Old Testament! At the beginning of ch. 16, the use of *σποβάλλειν* deserves notice. This verb almost always has a pejorative meaning, and L.N.P-N.F. translates it "disguised Himself by appearing in a body". It is not by any means certain that this is the correct meaning; it may mean "subordinated Himself" (that is, in appearing through a body, *φανῆναι* - epexegetic infinitive), the same meaning as the famous *ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν* of Philipp. 2:7. But the former meaning is in accordance with much else that Athanasius wrote, and along with his statements about the Body being an accommodation to human prejudice, it does suggest, once again, a primarily instrumentalist doctrine of the Humanity of our Lord.

18 The next chapter, ch. 17, is a digression, albeit a very important one, on the relation between the general omnipresence of the Logos and His presence in the incarnate Christ. In ch. 18, Athanasius returns to the issues discussed above; for that reason we shall treat it now, and return to ch. 17 later. Chapter 18 is the final solution of the problem of the impassibility and immateriality of the Logos, in view of the sufferings undoubtedly endured by the incarnate Christ. At the end of ch. 17 he had pointed out that the Sun is not contaminated through its illumination of otherwise dark objects; with this analogy Athanasius says, at the beginning of ch. 18: "Accordingly, when the inspired writers (*θεολόγοι*) on this matter speak (*λέγουσι*) of Him as eating and being born (pres. participles only, no *ὡς* etc.), know that the body, as body (*ὡς σῶμα*) was born, and sustained with food corresponding to its nature (94), while God the Logos Himself to be *οὐκ ἄνθρωπον, ... ἀλλὰ Θεὸν Λόγον*. But these things are said (*λέγεται*) about Him because the actual body which ate,

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(94) *καταλλήλως τροφῆς* : Montf. ~~*congruentis alimentis*~~  
*congruentibus alimentis*



was born and suffered was of nobody else but the Lord; and because, having become man, it was proper for these things to be said ( $\lambda\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ ) of Him as man (95), that it should be plain that He had a body in truth ( $\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon\acute{\alpha}$ ) and not in appearance ( $\phi\alpha\upsilon\tau\alpha\sigma\iota\acute{\alpha}$ ). But just as from these things He was known to be bodily present, so from His works which He did in (96) the body He made Himself known to be Son of God. ... (John 10:37-8 quoted)... For just as, though invisible, He is known through the works of creation, so, having become man, and being in the body unseen, it may be known from His works that He Who can do this is not man, but the Power and Logos of God (97). For His calling to order the evil spirits, and their being driven forth, is not a human deed ( $\alpha\upsilon\theta\rho\omega\pi\iota\nu\omicron\nu$ ), but Divine. Or who that saw Him healing the diseases to which the human race is subject can still think Him  $\alpha\upsilon\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\nu$  καὶ οὐ Θεόν?..."

18 & 19 Then follows, in the remainder of ch. 18 and ch. 19, a whole series of the Mighty Acts of Christ; His healing miracles, with special reference to congenital diseases; His forming of a body in the Virgin Mary, the transformation of water into wine, the walking on the sea, the feeding of the 5,000; the reaction of the created universe to the crucifixion. All these miracles are treated as revealing the cosmological and creative activity of the Logos; this is still the case even where such things as the forgiveness of sins are also mentioned in the Scriptural account, such other issues being not mentioned by Athanasius. In this section, as well as Logos, the titles "Son, Wisdom and Power of God" (19:129B), and "Son of God and Saviour of all" (19:129B), are also used to express the Deity of Christ. This section is finally summarised in ch. 19: 129A & C, which now follows, with the omission of intervening material on some detailed miracles: "But all this it seemed well for the Saviour to

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(95) ὥς περὶ ἀνθρώπου.  
(96) δὲ + gen.

(97) οὐκ ἄνθρωπος ἀλλὰ Θεοῦ δυνάμεις καὶ Λόγος.



do; that since men had failed to know His providence, revealed in the universe, and had failed to perceive His Godhead shown in creation, they might at any rate from the works of the body recover their sight, and through Him to receive knowledge of the Father, inferring...from particular cases His providence over the whole...Thus, then, God the Logos showed Himself to men by His works."

20 "... (the cause of His bodily appearing was)...that it was in the power of none other to turn the corruptible to incorruption, except the Saviour Himself, Who had at the beginning made all things  $\epsilon\gamma\kappa\omicron\upsilon\kappa\delta\omicron\upsilon\tau\omega\nu$ , that none other could anew create the likeness of God's Image (98) for men, save the Image of the Father; and that none other could render the mortal immortal, save our Lord Jesus Christ, being the Life Itself ( $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma\omega\eta\varsigma$ ), and that none other could teach men of the Father and destroy the worship of the idols, save the Logos, that orders all things and is alone the true Only-Begotten Son of the Father".

This section confirms that for Athanasius the chief interest in the miracles was their revelation of the cosmological aspect of the Deity of Christ. Further, it can be said fairly that there is virtually a 100% correlation between this Deity of Christ and action; correspondingly the "body", or humanity of Christ, is the instrument of this action. This corresponds to the correlation that we have noted before, with reference to Christ's work of justification, between humanity and passion. Unfortunately, this is a very natural way to look at this matter, and Athanasius did not change his position until, under the stress of the Arian controversy, he developed or rediscovered the doctrine of the active humanity of Christ. (Again, this is not as yet the full Chalcedonian Christology. Athanasius certainly preserves the anhypostasia, and if anything overpreserves it.) In ch. 16:124C, Christ is "not only man, but God", but later, in ch. 16:124D, He is "no longer man, but God the Logos" (that is,

(98) τὸ κατ'εἰκόνα



is no longer to be regarded as man, but God.) Once explicitly, and virtually twice in three sentences, in 18:128B, he says, much more explicitly, still that Christ is not man, but God..., and in the intervening sentence, the expulsion of demons is described as a purely Divine work and not human. There is no doubt where Athanasius stands on what Chalcedon later called the *ὑπόστασις*. It is in the field of the Chalcedonian *φύσις* that one is a little more doubtful. (From one point of view, the Athanasian position appears to be a sort of hyper-Monophysitism, with with Christ, or what matters of Him, being entirely God both in *φύσις* and *ὑπόστασις*, and nothing but God, and the body only the instrument of the God-Christ or the minimum mechanism whereby He might suffer for us.) In the same way, a man can do an immense number of things with a motor-car which he would be utterly incapable of doing without it, but the motor-car is never (or should never be!) part of the man's human qualities, let alone his innermost nature. In favour of this interpretation are Athanasius's emphasis, in season or out of season, on the notion of our *θεωποίησις*, which presumably means sharing in the Divine Nature, and also his emphasis on the Acts of Christ not only being Acts of God, as a brute fact, but being also Acts revealing God, which again presumably revealing the Divine Nature. And there is also the historical fact that Monophysitism, as a heresy, was later specially associated with Alexandria; the Coptic Church is Monophysite to this day (99). On the other hand, although Athanasius often talks this way, this interpretation may not do justice to the closeness of the association of the body with Christ. From another point of view, the Athanasian position could be considered as a 100% correlation between the Deity of Christ and the highest level, or the

(99) The statements of Harnack, *Hist. Dogm. (E.T.)* IV:p.223: "Monophysitism...is without doubt the legitimate heir of the theology of Athanasius, and the fitting expression of Greek Christianity", and Stäcker, "Athanasiana...", p. 117: "Für Cyrill bildet er die direkte Vorstufe", are probably very unfair to the mature anti-Arian theology of Athanasius. But they are absolutely right for the "De Incarnatione" alone.



ὑποστάσις, and also between the Humanity and some lower level, presumably the φύσις. This interpretation would very closely resemble Transubstantiation as applied to the Eucharistic elements, although its philosophical vocabulary is different, besides being originally Latin. We have already noted that the Chalcedonian use of φύσις is quite different from its use in, say, "De Incarnatione Verbi Dei," ch. 1.

The last point to notice is Athanasius's final solution of the problem of how human attributes are to be predicated of Christ, Who is God, and as such impassible, etc. Previously, Athanasius has said that the Logos gave the body over to death, etc. Now, he remembers the way that Scripture describes the matter, and at least suggests that the original description may not be entirely satisfactory, since it is here affirmed beyond all question that Christ, i.e. Christ as a whole being, suffered, was crucified, was tempted, was hungry, and in other ways was the subject of these all too human predicates. Athanasius's solution leaves the problem open rather than solves it (ch. 18, beg.), that is, he says that, as these things were endured by the body, and the body was really His, it is therefore right to say that the sufferings were His. Unfortunately, the atmosphere of "it may be said", as distinct from "it is actually the case" hangs around all Athanasius's discussions of the question. In fact, the question comes up in a far more acute form in the "Contra Arianos", where the issue is raised of the sense in which it is right, if at all, to call Christ "a creature" or to use the corresponding verbal forms. Newman, in his notes on C. Ar. II:47 and III:31 settles the problem too easily by invoking the principle of the communicatio idiomatum, and the type of predication whereby we say that a man is bald, that is, man as a whole, whereas the predicate bald properly refers only to the hair. He admits, following Thomas Aquinas, that this principle applies in the case of certain predicates which must by their very nature refer only to a certain part of the body and not the whole of



it; on this understanding the admittedly loose ascription of such predicates to the man as a whole is unambiguous and is admitted in common speech. The sort of case where one cannot speak in this way are, for example, that we must not call a white-haired negro "white" (an example actually used by Aquinas), but must specifically restrict the application of the predicate to the hair. Similarly, in this case, there are certain predicates which, by their very nature, so intimately concern the whole centre of Christ's Person that they cannot be applied to Christ as a whole simply on the basis of their connection with the body, if they contradict some other feature of what was later described as His *ὑπόστασις*; such inadmissible predicates are "creature" as a noun, and "adopted son". But such verbs as "suffered", since they apply essentially to the body and to the body alone, can be applied in this way to the whole Person of Christ. With due respect to Newman, this solution is not adequate. It is almost certain that such predicates as "bald", "blind", etc., are only used in this way, i.e. loosely applied to the person as a whole, when they have some overriding relevance to the whole personality. When we say that a man is bald, we do not only think of his lack of hair; we think as well of all the other changes of maturity or senescence which are associated with the loss of hair on the head, changes both physiological and psychological. When we talk of a "blind" man, we think of his blindness not only as a total lack of the sense of sight, but also as a disability that radically affects his whole way of life and his whole personality. The author of this thesis remembers being informed by his medical friends that doctors normally describe a patient as "tuberculous" or a "cripple", etc., only when a certain stigma is involved; otherwise they say that he "has" the disease in question, or they specify the exact organ of the body involved. This an unfair way of putting it, but if, for "stigma", we read "a fundamental change involving the whole way of life of the patient", it is completely correct. Thus, it is wrong, and probably always has



been wrong in principle, to invoke this form of predication to solve these issues. But even if it were right in principle, it would certainly be wrong in this particular case. If there is anything that by its very nature must apply to the whole person, it is suffering: this is so psychologically, physiologically and in every other way. For those who did not have our modern knowledge, the Words from the Cross should have been sufficient warning on this point. Thus, it is no solution of the problem to say that Athanasius was using the idea of the communicatio idiomatum, and in fact elaborating it for the first time. This is so, as a plain fact, but it does not meet the case. Unfortunately, we cannot yet interpret Athanasius in meliorem partem and maintain that his doctrine is that Christ took our body so as to take our sufferings: that is, maintain that, for Athanasius, the communicatio idiomatum was an ontological fact, not a descriptive principle. As has been said above, when Athanasius introduces the subject, under the direct influence of Scripture, he does speak in this way, but when he analyses the issue in detail, he speaks in the less satisfactory way which we have described above, saying that the suffering is entirely of the body, and when he returns to the problems posed by the Scriptural way of speaking, there is too much talk about "what is said" to make his exculpation entirely convincing. The fact is that so far Athanasius has not the intellectual system to describe the unity between the Deity and the Humanity of Christ which we find in Scripture, which is far closer than anything that could be described according to the system available to him. Later, in the "Contra Arianos", Athanasius sometimes uses language reminiscent of the "De Incarnatione"; at other times he does indicate a more satisfactory line of approach.

We can now return to ch. 17, which we have left on one side for the moment. In it, Athanasius takes pains to show that the Incarnation did not limit the omnipresence of the Logos which was His by nature.



This emphasis is characteristically associated in Patristic theology with John of Damascus (100), and in later days with Calvin, when it became known as the "Extra Calvinisticum". "For He was not...enclosed (*περικεκλεισμένος*) in the body, nor while present in the body, was He absent elsewhere; nor, while He moved the body, was the universe left void of His working and His providence, but a most paradoxical thing, Logos as He was, He was not contained (*συνείχετο*) by anything, but rather did He contain (*συνείχε*) all things; and just as while present in the whole of creation He is at once distinct in being from the universe and is present in all things by His own power (101), giving order to all things, and over all and in all revealing His own providence, and giving life to each thing and all things, including the whole without being included (102), but being in His own Father alone wholly and in every respect - thus, even while present in a human body and Himself quickening it, He was...quickening the universe as well...(A human soul cannot act at a distance, but only think about things at a distance)... But the Logos of God in His man's nature (103) was not like that; for He was not bound to the body, but He rather exercised dominion over it, but was actually in everything, and while external to the universe (104) He abode in the Father alone,...He at once lived the common life as man (105) and as Logos continued to quicken (*ἐβωοχώνει*) all things, and as Son co-existed with the Father. So, not even when the Virgin bore Him did He suffer change (106) nor by being in the body was He tarnished, but on the contrary He sanctified the body also. For not even by being in the universe does He share in its nature (107), but all things, on the

{100} "Ekdoxis", 3:7.

{101} Ἐκτὸς μὲν ἔστι τοῦ πάντος κατ' οὐσίαν, ἐν πᾶσι δὲ ἔστι τῶν αὐτοῦ δυνάμεσι (instrumental dative; not qualified by πᾶσι).

{102} περιέχων τὰ πάντα καὶ μὴ περιεχόμενος.

{103} ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ - the first use of this word in such an unqualified way to denote Christ's Humanity.

{104} ὡς ἐφ' ὧν ὄντων (105) ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἐπολιτεύετο

{106} οὐδὲ τῆς Παρθένου τίκτουσῃς ἐπάσχεν αὐτός.

{107} τῶν πάντων μεταλαμβάνει.



contrary, are quickened and nourished by Him...(In the same way, the Sun is not defiled by its illumination of terrestrial bodies; much less is the Logos defiled...)."

This is a statement of the principle that the Logos, as well as being in the body of Christ, continued His presence in the universe outside the body, just as before (108). This principle is maintained not only with reference to the spatial presence of the Logos but also with reference to His power; His work of creation and providence in general continues without any diminution whatsoever. (With the possible exception of Lutheranism, the whole of theology has accepted it as an absolute necessity of faith, as does the writer of this thesis.) This is not the place to argue in detail about it, beyond the observation that it was the first really thorough exposition of this principle, from which the other later accounts followed. Athanasius in particular was absolutely committed to this doctrine because the theology which he had inherited on the intellectual side, as the "Contra Gentes" shows, greatly emphasised the Second Person as Logos, and in the cosmological sense too. (One of the constant features in Athanasian theology is that it is absolutely Logocentric (Logos in the sense of the Second Person), even if not quite Christocentric, with Christ referring to the Incarnate Second Person. One thing that is too often forgotten is that this is the characteristic which Athanasius shares with his great enemies the Arians. Thus, the denial of the "Extra Calvinisticum" would have been intellectually and theologically inconceivable and nonsensical for Athanasius; it would have implied the disorganisation and collapse of the universe, an ultimate and conclusive form of the "darkness over all the land" which Athanasius himself stresses as the reaction of the created world to the Cross.) A little examination shows that he is right. The denial of the

(108) For a good summary of the whole question, see Barth, Ch. Dog. Vol. I. Pt. II, pp. 166-170. This chapter is here quoted, top of p. 169, as the first and definitive expression of this doctrine in the Fathers.



"Extra-Calvinisticum" is intimately bound up with the Kenotic theory in its most extreme form; in fact the latter is simply the dynamic form of the former, and arose in the same Lutheran milieu as the former. But in that case, the revelation in the Incarnate Christ has nothing to do with His eternal and Divine Majesty. Therefore, either this can be known by natural theology alone, or it is absolutely unknowable. Insofar as the latter is the answer intended, may not these doctrines be the sign of a hidden Marcionite strain? The great strength of the Athanasian doctrine is that it affirms that the Revelation of the Incarnate Christ, and the Divine Majesty in general and in eternity, are absolutely consistent, whatever reservations we may have about his tendencies in the direction of natural theology, or about his tendency to think cosmologically rather than soteriologically. (This applies both ontologically and locally, and also dynamically; the miracles of Christ on earth are consistent with, and truly reveal, the eternal power and glory of God.)

However, Athanasius enunciates his doctrine rather than proves it in any sense. It may be that it is impossible to give a perfectly satisfactory account of it, as it is the supreme paradox of the Incarnation. But, although his enunciation is excellent, Athanasius, when he comes to give a further account of it, uses an analogy which is misleading and even irrelevant, the analogy of the sun illuminating and giving life to the otherwise dark and lifeless earth, without (apparently) being quenched thereby. We cannot discuss the physics, ancient and modern, of this analogy. But it is relevant and correct to point out that to bring in the Sun means bringing in the problem of action at a distance, a thing which Athanasius himself recognises when he indicates the way in which the Sun is to be considered different from ourselves. Now, this whole issue will be later shown to be supremely concerned with the theology of the Spirit, and Athanasius's final form of this metaphor, in the *Ad Serap.* I, shows that he has recognised this; the Father is  $\phi\omega\varsigma$ , or the Sun



(φως = light source), the Son is ἀπαύλας, radiance, these both after Heb. 1:3 and also exploited in the anti-Arian writings, passing; the Spirit is "the light in which we are illuminated". Here we have another and most pointed case of something being taken over by the Logos which essentially belongs to the Spirit, and this is confirmed by the fact that the whole atmosphere of this metaphor is one of sanctification, which in all theological traditions is chiefly associated with the Third Person. Again, in all the later Sun or sight metaphors, the source of light is undoubtedly the First Person, and rightly so. Here, the source is apparently the Second Person. But the most serious inadequacy of this metaphor is that it has nothing whatever to say to us about what has been called the scandal of particularity, almost certainly the greatest continuing weakness in Athanasian theology, and perhaps even in Greek theology as a whole; that is, the fact that the Logos came to our world at one time and one place. Even worse, it does a grave injustice to the fact that the Logos came so intimately into our world that he was, in one sense, tangible! (I John 1:1). Surely even the most naïf<sup>ve</sup> and unscientific inhabitant of the Roman Empire, let alone the leading intellectual of Alexandria, the astronomical capital of the world, knew that the Sun kept some sort of distance from the Earth, and, as the legend of Daedalus testified, remained intangible! These remarks are to the point if Athanasius is speaking about the world of man in general, and the fact that he talks in earlier chapters about the necessity for the Logos's presence within mankind in general is evidence that he thinks along these lines. If Athanasius is thinking here solely or principally of the relation of the Logos to the one and only Body of Christ, it solves some of the problems that we have raised here, at the expense of making others far more acute, for example, that of contiguity.

However, there is one sound feature of this analogy, and that is that it disposes of the charge of Harnack and others, including Raven,



that Athanasius's doctrine of reconciliation, and specially of sanctification, is physical, chemical or even pharmacological, that is, that it involves the instillation of a divine substance. The emphasis of Athanasius on action at a distance completely excludes this interpretation. One thing that he is trying to convey by this metaphor is the supra-material character of God, as being analogically suggested by the status of the Sun compared with the Earth, which again excludes physicism or chemism in Harnack's sense.

This chapter is significant as a first approximation to the doctrine of the mutual *περιχώρησις*. Athanasius starts off with the traditional sort of statement, that the Logos is in the Universe, in the Stoic manner (and perhaps corresponding to the Aristotelian statement about Forms being in particulars); later, he begins to reverse the description and talk about the Logos as containing all things, or perhaps the universe collectively. Whereas by His power the Logos has the capacity to be, and actually is, inside all things (109), He is rather in His essence (*κατ' οὐσίαν*) outside all things, or the universe. The emphasis that he places on inclusion, etc., suggests that Athanasius has in mind the logic of class relation in connection with predication, but, in view of what we have already noted of his general philosophical interests, he probably thought of this along the lines of the Platonism of the Socratic dialogues. He would also have had such Scriptural passages as John 14:10 in mind, but it is notable that he does not deduce the symmetrical and mutual *περιχώρησις* which is demanded by this verse, and which is in fact its subject-matter - a repetition of the failure to draw this conclusion from the same verse after explicitly citing it in C. Gen. 47. Now, according to ordinary logic, the predicate of an A proposition includes the subject, but is in general not included by the subject, and to that extent can be

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(109) Cf. Aristotle's doctrine that the Forms are IN particulars. Cf. Zeller, op. cit. III:219-220, and Aristotelian references.



said to be "outside" the subject; in the same sense the subject is "in" the predicate. This is not to suggest that Athanasius regarded the Logos as a kind of summa genus of reality, although this way of looking at the matter naturally follows from certain forms of the Greek Logos doctrine. What is however certainly of interest to Athanasius is the fact that, according to the Platonism of the Socratic Dialogues, the predicate would be a Form or Idea, and as such it could have an irreversible ontological superiority over the subject. (Thus the statement that the Logos includes all things, and the other related statements, signify for Athanasius the supremacy of the Logos over the creatures.) By contrast, the Logos is, in the same sense, "in" the Father. The fact that Athanasius has this form of Platonism in mind is shown by the fact that the Logos being "outside" all things is the same as the denial that He *τῶν πάντων μεταλαμβάνει*. The verb is inadequately translated in L.N.P.-M.F. by "share in the nature of...". The operative part of the word is the prefix, which indicates the Platonist relation of participation. The verb thus means "to receive in the Platonist relation". Later, in the "Contra Arianos", Athanasius has to develop the symmetrical and mutual *περιχώρησις* as the minimum for the refutation of Arianism (110). It is of interest too that, in the Epistles to Serapion, Athanasius lays extreme emphasis on the phrase *ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι*, finally saying that all things happen from the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit (111), and as he here virtually says that all things are in the Logos this is yet another case of a principle that Athanasius originally accepted with reference to the Logos, but which was later transferred to the Spirit.

Another point that must be noticed is the most important passage in the middle of the chapter where Athanasius maintains in so many words that the title Logos has the same relation to the cosmological status of the Second Person as the title Son to His intra-Trinitarian status, and the

(110) See C. Ar. III:1-8.  
 (111) Passim, esp. I:51.



title Man to His incarnate life on earth. This confirms that, as regards his favourite title for the Second Person, that Athanasius was still in the main operating, in his more intellectual moments, with the Greek Logos doctrine, (and that in this doctrine Logos was a cosmological term.) We shall see later how dangerous this was as an inducement to Arianism, and how one of Athanasius's great tasks in refuting Arianism was to break this most mischievous correlation.

Finally, we must note the first use of  $\delta \text{ ἄνθρωπος}$ , as distinct from the narrower  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$  to denote the humanity of Christ as a singular entity. Athanasius always uses expressions such as  $\text{ἐν ἀνθρωπότητι}$  but this does not exactly correspond as it lacks the element of singularity. This does show that this is an undoubted Athanasian usage, and its occurrence in doubtful tracts is not automatically a sign of their Nestorian or Apollinarian provenance. It represents Athanasius's first move away from the proto-Apollinarian Christology associated with the use of  $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$  for the humanity of Christ, and a move in the direction of Chalcedon. The fact that the Apollinarians exploited such expressions as  $\delta \text{ κυριακὸς ἄνθρωπος}$  (if it is true - the Patristic evidence on Apollinarianism is very confused) is an indication of how far theology as a whole moved between the "De Incarnatione Verbi Dei" and the height of the Apollinarian controversy; the background of the former was the Greek Logos theology; the background of the latter was Cappadocian Trinitarianism.

This concludes our section on what might be called the Second Ground of the Incarnation. There are two main aspects, the recreation of man in the image of God, and the revelation to mankind, once again, of right worship of, and right conduct towards, the True God. This is much closer to the cosmological interests of the older Logos doctrine than the First Ground of the Incarnation, and therefore this section is much closer in spirit to the "Contra Gentes". The body of the section is the great account of the miracles of Christ in relation to His Person and work.



Here, corresponding to the earlier tendency to consider the Humanity of Christ as the body, and the body as the means whereby the penal part of Christ's work might be done, the body is considered as the means whereby the revelatory portion of the work might be done. Thus, the distinction between Deity and Humanity of Christ is again correlated with that between Agency and Instrumentality, corresponding to the earlier distinction between Action and Passion.

This concludes what we have called the aetiological sections of the "De Incarnatione" as a whole; at this stage, the work changes character somewhat, so that here would be a good point to break off and carry out a lexicographic survey of these chapters.

Guido Müller's classification, modified, is: 1. Logos called God in the same sense as the Father (normally *Θεὸς Λόγος* etc.): 7:108D (work in and at creation). 10:113B (had to be Himself Incarnate). 10:113C (Incarn. of). 16:124D and 18:128A (Christ God the Logos rather than man). 18:128A (co-exists with the body). 19:129C (showed Himself through the works). Of these seven, one refers altogether to before the Incarnation, one to the Incarnation considered prospectively or aetiologically, one to the Incarnation as an actual event, and four to what for argument <sup>is</sup> are best considered as what Chalcedon meant by the *ὑποστάσις* of the Incarnate Christ.

B. Origin; Logos of the Father: 1:97A (introductory chapter, Godhead of, in narrow sense), 7:109A (Creator and prospective Reconciler through the Incarn.) 10:112D (reconciled man through Incarn.). 11:116A (sinful men could not know Him). 11:116B (The Image to be seen by men for their enlightenment). 15:124B (the Victor over death). 16:125A (Christ known by works to be Logos of the Father). These seven references are rather more complicated; the last is the Hypostasis of Christ, and 15:124B is also best grouped here. Three plainly refer to the Logos Incarnandus - Logos to be Incarnate, and one refers to the Incarnation itself, while the first does not fit any present classification well.



3. Origin: Logos of God: 8:109A (παράγινεται into our realm). 9:112A (Agent of the Incarnation). 15:124A (works show L. of G. to be God, and not the demons). 16:124C (Christ not man only but God and the Logos and Wisdom of the True God). 17:125C (can operate at distance unlike human soul). 17:125D (defiled by body even less than the Sun by the Earth). 18:128B (Christ not man, but L. of G. and Power). 20:132B (body preserved through the Logos that indwelt). Of these eight cases, one (17:125C) in spite of its context (the Extra Calvinisticum), must be considered as subsumed under the pre-Incarnate Logos of Creation, the first two refer to the Logos as the Agent of the Incarnation, and the other five to the Hypostasis of the Incarnate Christ.

4. Common perfections and honours with God: Not circumscribed in the Body: 17:125A (probably best classified as Pre-Existent Logos, but any classification is difficult). Creation διὰ τοῦ Λόγου: 3:101A 3:101B,. 11:113D Creation ἐν Λόγῳ (actually a pronoun): 11:116A. Logos δημιουργεῖ: 1:97C (all refer to the pre-Incarnate Logos in His capacity as Creator).

Logos ἐνανθρωπεῖ: 10:113B (τὸν Θεὸν Λόγον). ἐνοικεῖ etc.: 9:112A, B bis, 20:132B. ἐπιδημεῖ: 14:121B (ὡς ἄνθρωπος), 20:129D (subject not expressed as Logos in last two). ἐπιφανεῖα of the Logos: 1:97A, 8:109A. φανέρωσις of Logos: 1:97B (in body). Logos σπέρβαλεν ἑαυτὸν διὰ σώματος φανῆναι: 16:124B. Logos παράγινεται (into our life etc.): 8:109A. Logos took (to Himself) a body (σῶμα in all cases): 8:109B and C bis, 9:112A bis. 10:113B. 13:120B. 20:132A (body indicated). Body μεταλαμβάνει τοῦ Λόγου: 9:112A. All 21 cases refer to the Incarnation as an act.

5. What Müller describes in the interests of dogma and uniformity as the Perfection of Human and Divine Natures, but which is erroneously so described (with reference to the Human Nature; all cases cited here properly refer to the Divine Nature or what was later described as such: 1:97C. 16:124C (not only man but God, and Logos and Wisdom



of the True God). 16:124D (no longer man but God), 17:125A (not circumscribed by Body). 17:125C. 17:125C alterum (as Logos was quickening all things). 18:128A (co-existing with the body). 18:128A (not man, but God the Logos). 18:128B (not man, but the Power and Logos of God). 19:129C (manifested Himself to man through the (bodily) works). All these refer to what was later described as the Hypostasis of the Incarnate Christ, except 17:125C alt., which refers to the pre-existent Logos.

6. Same Logos is Author of our Reconciliation: 1:97A. 3:101B bis (i.e. the general grace B.C.; "giving them a portion even of the power of His own Logos; so that, having as it were a kind of shadow of the Logos) 5:104D and 105A (by the grace of the Logos in creation). 5:105A (men preserved before the Fall διὰ τὸν συνόντα τοῦτοῖς Λόγον). 6:108A (partaking of the Logos as created before Fall). 9:112A (Body of Christ incorrupt through the indwelling Logos). 9:112B (because of the coming of the Logos, corruption has lost its hold over men generally). Five of these eight references refer to the Logos as the Pre-Incarnate Creator, in spite of Müller's heading (which does not fit in this case); the other three to the Logos as the Agent of the Incarnation as an Act.

Of a total of 67 cases of the Logos as title of the Second Person, 14 refer to the work of the Pre-existent Logos in creation or the creative work of the Logos independent of the Incarnation, 4 refer to the Incarnation as an event that is to take place, 28 to the Logos as Agent in the Incarnation as an act that actually took place, and 20 to what Chalcedon later called the Hypostasis of the Incarnate Christ. One has been left on one side. This appears at first sight to contradict our description of this section as fundamentally aetiological, but this is not so, because of the very high prevalence of statements of the form; the human predicament was such and such; therefore the Logos did such and such.

There are only 6 instances, by contrast, of the use of ὁ ἱσ,



Son, as the title of the Second Person: 9:112B (incorruptible Son of God; refers to the work of the Incarnation). 14:120C (Son of the Father: Agent of the Incarnation). 15:124A (Son of God: alone appeared among men). 18:128A (known as Son of God by the works done in the body). 19:129B (of God = Wisdom and Power; known by works as Jesus). 19:129B alterum (of God, and Saviour of all, recognised as such by creation at the Crucifixion). Three refer to the Second Person as the Agent of the Incarnation, three to the Hypostasis of the Incarnate Christ. It is to be noted that this title is very uncommon in this section still, and all the references involve the Incarnation as having actually taken place, although these references are so rare compared with those to Logos that it is doubtful how significant the difference is.

We shall, with the "De Incarnatione", also follow some of the other titles of the Second Person, since it is interesting to notice their relatively greater predominance in the later portions of the book.  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ , Christ, is not very common and will not be followed in detail, except to note that it is much commoner in the later chapters; its first reference in isolation in the earlier part is 19:129B, in which it refers to Christ on the Cross. According to Müller it always refers to the Incarnate Second Person, and rightly so.  $\text{Ἰησοῦς}$ , Jesus, is always used in combination; there are four cases of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ: 2:100C (heretics postulate a creator other than the Father of - - - ) 3:101B (God made everything through His Own Logos, Jesus Christ our Lord) 11:116A (our Lord Jesus Christ is God's Image). 20:129D (none other could render the mortal immortal, save our Lord Jesus Christ, the  $\text{Αὐτοσωτήρ}$ ).

The first reference does not fit into our own categories, the last refers to the Incarnation as prospective, and the other two to the general pre-Incarnate work of the Logos, which is specifically placed in parallel to it in 3:101B (for that reason the emphasis may be rather on the personal identity of the Incarnate Christ and the Logos); the third case 11:116A, the context perhaps deals rather with the restoration of the Image in the



Incarnation. The same applies to 13:120B, in which the Image of God = our Saviour Jesus Christ; this exhausts the references to the name Jesus.

Σωτήρ, Saviour, in addition to the above, is used in the following instances: 1:97C (the Saviour bore a body, not according to Nature). 4:104A (the ἐπιφάνεια of the S.). 10:113A (reference to Biblical witnesses to S.). 10:113C (ἐνανθρώπησις of the S.). 15:124A bis (from the S.'s works...only the S. among men appeared as the Son of God). 19:129A (all this it seemed well for the S. to do). 19:129B (the suffering Christ not merely man, but Son of God and Saviour of all). 20:129C (it was in the power of none other to turn the corruptible to incorruption save the Saviour Himself, that had at the beginning also made all things ex nihilo). Of these eight references, two refer to the Second Person prospectively incarnate, three refer to the Second Person as the Active Agent of the Incarnation, and one to the Hypostasis of the Incarnate Christ. On the other hand, two of these references obviously refer to Jesus in the Synoptic sense, which differentiates it from Logos and Son, as used so far here.

Κύριος, Lord, resembles Saviour: 2:100C (the Lord says, (Matt. 19:4-6)). 4:104A (the L. made haste to help us and appear among men = Logos) 15:121D (L. works through the body). 15:124A (creation confessed Christ as L. at crucifixion). 15:124A alterum (as incarnate, puts spirits to flight). 15:124B (only Ld. is true and Logos of Father, shown by Resurrection). 17:125C (much less is the all-holy Logos of God, Maker and L. of the Sun defiled by the body). 18:128A (the body was the Lord's). 18:128C (the congenital miracles prove Christ L. of human becoming). 18:128D (similarly the Virgin Birth). 18:128D alterum (miracle at Cana shows Him L. of essence of all waters). 18:129A (feeding of 5000 shows Him Lord whose providence is over all). 19:129B (L. of evil spirits). Of these 13 references, the first refers to the



Synoptic Jesus, the next two to the Second Person as the Agent of the Incarnation, and the last ten require special observation. They all come from the Revelatory section, and refer to the general creative majesty of the Second Person as God, but in every case it is as revealed by the works of the Incarnate Christ. In each of these, incidentally, "Lord" is a circumstantially detailed function and not merely a title.

From this, it appears that the term of choice for the Second Person is undoubtedly Logos, and that this supremacy is at its plainest as regards the pre-Incarnate Second Person, or Second Person destined to be incarnate. The more the Second Person is regarded as incarnate, the greater the tendency to use another title; the instances grouped under the title Lord are instructive in this regard precisely because they are so unusual.

The analysis of  $\phi\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$ ,  $\sigma\acute{o}\sigma\iota\varsigma$  and  $\sigma\pi\omicron\sigma\tau\alpha\varsigma$  can be deferred, since they are not very common and do not vary greatly throughout the book, but the terms for the Humanity of Christ merit immediate attention. The following scheme will be superimposed on Müller's: The humanity as subject both grammatically and actually, the humanity as grammatically subject, but the verb to which it is subject denotes a  $\pi\alpha\theta\omicron\varsigma$ , the humanity as the object both grammatically and actually of external action (including nominative subject of an expressly passive verb). Then, the Second Person being subject with the humanity as object, the Second Person doing something in, or by, etc. the body, and finally and most important, the Second Person or the Person of Christ doing or suffering  $\omega\varsigma \zeta\acute{o}\omega\omicron\upsilon\mu\omicron\varsigma$ , etc.

The following is Müller's classification, with our own afterwards.  $\Sigma\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha$ , body: Christ's own: 8:109D (Death exhausted its rights  $\epsilon\upsilon\tau\acute{\omega}\nu \kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\alpha\kappa\acute{\omega}\nu \sigma\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha\tau\iota$ ). The body is the object of external action.

Creaturely features: Generation: 18:128A bis ( $\tau\omicron\sigma\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha$ ,  $\omega\varsigma \sigma\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha$  was born, nourished, etc.). 18:128 tert. (the Logos, co-existing with the body). 18:128 quart. (the body ate, was born, suffered). 18:128D (the b. proceeding from the Virgin alone, i.e. Virgin Birth).



20:132A (His own b. displayed incorruptible). 20:132A alterum (same as 8:109D). Of these seven cases, the Humanity is never actually subject, in one (18:128D) it is formally subject but actually on the passive side, in three cases the body is the object of external action, and in the other two (incl. 18:128A tert.) it is the object of the action of the Second Person as subject. In the remaining case, the humanity is the subject of one genuinely active verb and object of two other verbs.

Passions: 10:113C (by the sacrifice of His own Body)(object of the action of the Logos). παθητόν, κ.τ.λ.: 19:129B (He is recognised and suffers ἐν τῷ σώματι). Died: 16:124D (Having given over the b. to death)(B. the object of the Logos's action). 19:129C (the death of the bod (gram. sub. gen. actually passive)).

Appearance in the body (emphasis on the Incarnation as an Act): 4:104A (φανεῖν αἰ σῶματι). 8:109C (γίνεται ἐν σώματι).

Logos dwells in body (and/or not enclosed in it): 8:109C. 17:125A and B and C (last six all classified as action of Logos in or by the body).

Logos takes body (unless verb is stated to be otherwise) etc. 18:128A (b. was the Lord's). 8:109C (+prepares, our body). 8:109B (our's, and not otherwise). 9:112A (+ leading it to death). 20:132A (+ mortal). 9:112A (+ mortal). 10:113B. 15:120A (+ mortal). 14:121B (like men's). 15:121D. Forms body: 18:128C. L. bears body: 1:97C. Glory not dulled by the body: 17:125C (probably best classified as an implied contrast with the body being passive to external agency). (With the exception of the last, all these 13 cases represent the Logos as subject and the body as object.)

Logos works, or is manifested, through (διὰ + gen.), in (ἐν), or by (dative of instrument) the body: 1:97C(in). 9:112B(through). 14:121C (from the works through the body), 15:121D (through the works of the b.). 16:124B(through). 17:125B (ἀπό = instrumental), 17:125D(in).



18:128A(in). 18:128A alterum (by works through the b.) 18:128B (not seen in the b.) ie. Barth's principle that every relation is a veiling.)  
 19:129A (seen through the works of the b.). 19:129B (in, known and suffering). 12 instances all of the same type.

The only other case is 8:109D (we are glorified τῇ τοῦ σώματος ἰδιοποιήσει): here patently the Logos is the virtual subject and the body the object of the act of incarnation itself.

There are 43 simple cases of *σῶμα* all told for the Humanity of Christ; Christ never acts, as a body, and the Humanity as Body is only subject in one case not included in the 43 in which there are two other verbs which show it as the object. Otherwise, there are two cases in which the body is formally subject but of a verb that represents a passive state, five in which it is the object of external action in the ordinary sense, 17 in which it is the direct object of the Logos as Subject, usually in the act of the Incarnation, and 19 in which it is the instrument of the Logos.

There are certain other expressions which do not give a very different picture in the few instances in which they are used: *σωματικῶς* *παρὼν*: 18:128A, the only adverbial form of the sort that becomes so important in the "Contra Arianos", 20:129C, the reason of His *σωματικῆς ἐπιφανείας*, both implicitly referring to the action of the Logos with the body as instrument. *Σὰρξ*, flesh, is, strange to say, not used; it is surprisingly rare in the genuine writings of Athanasius. *Ναός*, temple and *ὄργανον*, instrument, are used in the following cases, all of which refer to the Humanity as object of the action of the Logos: 8:109C (prepared for Himself *ναὸν καὶ σῶμα*, and made it His own *ὡς παρὸν ὄργανον*), 9:112A (offering His own *ναὸν καὶ σωματικὸν ὄργανον*), 20:132A (gave His own to death for us). These formulations do not change the picture that we have already formed of Athanasius's Christology; in fact, they exaggerate it if anything.



However, the picture becomes rather different when we consider the uses of the word *ἄνθρωπος*, man since they are rather different: the Logos becomes (*γίνεσθαι*) man: 18:128A and B. *ἄνθρωπος ἐφάνη*: 18:124C. Then there is the classification that Müller describes as "truly human and divine": 16:124C (not only man, but...) 17:125C *that he might ὡς ἄνθρωπος transfer man to himself* (the Logos of God *ἐν τῷ ἄνθρωπῳ* was not like that). 18:128A and B bis (Christ is not man (!) but God); these we must note, and exclude from any further reference or classification). The remaining examples of Müller are: 18:128A (it was proper for these things to be said of Him *ὡς περὶ ἄνθρωπου*, another example that is somewhat difficult to classify). 17:125C (*ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἐπολιτεύετο*). 14:121B (He sojourned *ὡς ἄνθρωπος*). 15:121D (He walks among men *ὡς ἄνθρωπος*). In addition, *ἄνθρωπινον* *τὸ ἀνθρώπινον* = the sphere of humanity; *ἡμῶν*: 1:97C and 17:125B, and the absolutely regular word of its kind for the Incarnation: 1:97A, 4:104A, 10:113C bis, 16:124C and D. Of the 13 pure cases of *ἄνθρωπος*, four could not be classified, being embarrassments, and one, 16:124C, we have also to leave aside because of its excessive formal if not material resemblance to the difficult usages. Of the other eight, one refers to the Logos being in the body, which is closest to our instrumental classification, and no less than seven, with which we include the first three listed, are of the type that we have found completely wanting in the other words, the Logos acting or being "as man", or even being genuinely human in the sense of John 1:14. It may or may not be significant that all these instances come in the Revelatory section; this would be the reverse of the Anselmic Christology. On the other hand, it is still true that these instances are definitely still subordinate to the instrumentalist Christology as instanced in the other words.

The reason for this is obvious. *ἄνθρωπος*, man, is inevitably a much more personal word than any of the others, and it must never be forgotten, to balance the picture, that there were instances, embedded



with the true type of Christology that we are now welcoming, in which, undoubtedly for the same reason, Athanasius had to deny that Christ was man at all. Thus it might fairly be said that the instrumentalist Christology was not enough when this word was used, and its very use would have forced a decision, either to an extreme Monophysite Christology or to Chalcedon. We can see Athanasius here wavering in embarrassment between these two alternatives, and we shall follow the outcome of this in the later Arian controversy. But in the main, the Christology of Athanasius is still instrumentalist.

The next 20 chapters, the remainder of ch. 20 - ch. 25 on the Death of Christ, chs. 26 - 32 on the Resurrection, and chs. 33 - 40 on the Refutation of the Jews, will be discussed relatively cursorily. For one thing, they do not concern the Trinitarian theology of Athanasius so directly, or the Christology, and besides, they have not the same solidity as the earlier material; this applies even to the soteriology. Athanasius put his most solid work into the first half of the "De Incarnatione", what might be called the aetiological section. This is another proof that for him the aetiological problem was uppermost; for what reason did the Logos, possessing as it did the character described in the "Contra Gentes", become incarnate, with all the sequelae thereto? (112) We shall do no more than summarise these sections, note a few general features of interest, and make more detailed references where there are any major agreements or disagreements with what has gone before.

20:129D fin Athanasius introduces his treatment on the Death of Christ - 25 by a summary of the principles that have been already enunciated (20:129D - 21:132D), that is, that Christ gave His body to death for three reasons,

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(112) Even so, the position of J. B. Berchem, "Le Christ Sanctificateur d'après Saint Athanase", Angelicum 1938: 515-57, that the real substance of Athanasius's theology is in the Cross and Resurrection is not really incorrect. Much that is often attributed to Athanasius's "Incarnational" theology is an artefact due to the great strength of Athanasius's aetiological thinking in this work.



to pay the debt ( $\tau\omicron\ \delta\phi\epsilon\lambda\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$  = the Anselmic "debitum") that men had contracted by their sin, to manifest His own superiority over death in the Resurrection, and to keep corruption away from His body by His own presence as Logos, even in the presence of organic death. Athanasius here makes a strict distinction between these two; all men must undergo the latter, but if corruption,  $\phi\theta\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}$ , is kept away, it no longer partakes of an eternal and irreversible loss and damnation of man. In a way that is not further specified, but only mentioned briefly, all this is efficacious for all men, now that it has been performed in Christ. Then, the question is raised why He did not die, quite literally, in bed. The reasons given are, that the Logos by its very nature excludes death, but He had to accept it from others "to perfect His sacrifice", (21:133B), since a sacrifice can be killed only by another. Again, any such procedure would be either essentially suicidal or a manifestation of weakness (22:133D f.). In 22:136A, Athanasius maintains that as the death was on behalf of others, it had to be accepted from others - an obscure argument; perhaps it illustrates a tendency to verbigeration which is probably due to the fact that technical circumstances at that time imposed compression and hindered exposition of arguments at great length. He then returns (22:136A - 23 end) to solid ground when he points out that Christ had to die so as to bring about a real resurrection in which we could share, and something that would not only be a real resurrection but also appear to be a real resurrection; therefore the death had to have maximum publicity. For the same reason (ch. 24) Christ could not choose His mode of death, so as to avoid all suspicion of stage-management, and in fact it had to be the most disgraceful form of death conceivable, so as to demonstrate that the triumph is complete. The following chapter, 25, is the only one that is substantially different in the two versions. In the usual, or longer text, it deals in detail with the reasons for the Cross, of all deaths: Christ died thus, so as to die the accursed death, to die with His hands



outspread, symbolically with one hand towards the Jews and the other towards the Gentiles, reconciling the two; to fulfil the typology of the serpent being lifted up, to complete the conquest of the Devil in His own medium, the air; as the first stage of His exaltation to heaven, where we are to follow Him. In the shorter Athens text, this chapter is devoted to what the Logos was doing while the body was in the tomb: He was preaching to the spirits in the underworld, according to I Peter 3:19.

There is not a great deal that has to be cited in detail. In this section which deals with the life of Christ historically rather than aetiologically, Athanasius is less inclined to use Logos as a title of the Second Person; here, Lord, Saviour, Christ and even *θεός* pure and simple, are much more in evidence. This shows that, for him, the term Logos was the term of choice to refer to the Second Person not yet incarnate, or to the Second Person to be incarnate; in a sense, if we could say so without blasphemy, the first 20 chapters consider the Incarnation from the point of view of the pre-incarnate Christ. Where the title Logos is used, it refers either to the pre-incarnate Second Person in this sense, or to the Deity of the Incarnate Christ, especially in its impossibility and immortality; the instances are 20:132B quater, 21:133B, 22:133D, 22:136A and B, 23:136D, 25:140C. There are three individual points that require attention. Athanasius's denial that the Logos could himself inflict death, and that death consequently had to be at the hands of others is a welcome advance on the sort of statement actually made earlier that the Logos virtually inflicted death on the body. On the other hand, it is itself open to the objection that, if the Logos was immune to all internal causes of death, He should a fortiori repel all external modes of it (113). Possibly this is a sign that Athanasius is not really at home in penal substitution, and in ch. 22 has reverted to what is generally regarded as the more typically Greek point of view.

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(113) It is not surprising that this confused passage is omitted in the shorter text.



Probably the problem cannot be solved until it is remembered that Christ, as part of His identification with sinners, was slain <sup>not</sup> by evil men, but by those who were legally and religiously the accredited servants of God, but the history of Christian anti-Judaism shows how little this has ever been understood. Secondly, at the end of ch.22(136B), the separation of the Logos from the body is accepted as synonymous with death. This is all well and good, but the matter would have to have been treated much more carefully if it had been made after the Apollinarian controversy had broken out, since to the Greeks, it was the  $\psi\chi\eta$  (which means both soul and life) the separation of which from the body meant death (114). Confusion at this point was later systematised by Apollinaris into the heresy that bears his name. Especially in view of the great emphasis of Athanasius on the Logos as the principle of life itself, it would have been the easiest thing in the world, even on the basis of the De Incarnatione, to fall into the Apollinarian heresy that the Logos in Christ replaced the soul. Finally, and more happily, Athanasius quotes, at the end of ch.25, from Ps.24:7, in reference to the exaltation of Christ, and refers it to His humanity, and therefore indirectly to Christian men generally, since it would be comparatively pointless as a reference to the Deity of Christ. However far-fetched this exegesis may appear, it is the first sign of the method later adopted generally in the anti-Arian writings.

26 Chapter 26 treats of the Resurrection. The only issues raised are the fact of its occurrence, and that it had to occur just when

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(114) See Plato "Phaedo" 106ff.



it did, since a shorter interval would throw doubt on the reality of Christ's death, and a longer interval would allow the disciples and others to grow away from Him and also make more credible the charge of fraud. At first sight, this is not much to say about the Resurrection, but its place in the earlier sections fully compensates for this. Indeed, one of the main reasons for the Cross was precisely that there should follow a real Resurrection, of the type which we would need by reason of our creaturely mortality, and not a mere continuance of existence, which would not do us men any good at all.

The next six chapters deal with the consequences of Christ's Resurrection and victory over death, and they are adduced in the first place as visible and tangible evidence of the reality of the Resurrection. These fruits are: the complete calmness and intrepidity of martyrs in face of death, normally their ultimate enemy, shown even by the weaker sex; the power of Christ over the ethical behaviour of men; the expulsion of demons, etc. by the Name of Christ and the sign of the Cross; the reduction of heathenism to impotence. The continuance of these works of Christ's power show that He is not dead but alive, and are a standing challenge to believe. For better or worse, we Western Christians and post-Christians, especially since Freud, cannot resist wondering whether this intrepidity was not occasionally due to the tendency of all persecuted groups to attract people who are subconsciously suicidal. In any case, Westerners have always had a much stronger sense of the insidious character of sin than Easterners, including Athanasius himself. Occasionally this degenerates into a form of morbid unbelief, but it cannot be denied that Athanasius treated this



question far too simply. The Resurrection occurred; Christ won the victory over death, and the consequences followed at once! There is not a word about the Holy Spirit and His sanctifying and testifying work in men; in fact, the Holy Spirit is not mentioned from the beginning of the De Incarnatione to the end, and it is here in particular that we notice its absence. Nor is there anything about the mission of the Church, or about the continued struggle with what is left of evil, except insofar as the *factum brutum* of martyrdom can be held to come under this head. One of the most curious features of theology almost throughout its history, if it is not impertinent to make this sort of comment, is that the kerygmatic mission of the Church, and the attendant risk or certainty of martyrdom, especially in relation to eschatology, have played very little part in the intellectually articulated structure of theology.

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Ignatius (not unnaturally considering the occasion of his

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writings) and Irenaeus were the great exceptions in the ancient

world; as far as regular dogmatics is concerned, Karl Barth is almost unique in later ages in his attempts to remedy this defect.

Unfortunately, Athanasius is not in this select group. At the moment he has nothing to say about these two points. It is not

that they were, as they would be on, say, the theory of Newman, too esoteric for public discussion, as they are discussed by Irenaeus,

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Hippolytus, and even to a certain extent in Justin's Apology to

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the Senate. It is a plain case of a gap in the theology of the

time. Indeed, there is not even any account of man's participation

(115) Cf. for example Romans 2:1 and 6:3

(116) Cf. Adv. Haer. Book III: ch.1 and Book V

(117) Eg. De Christo et Antichristo

(118) Eg. Ap.I: ch.20 for the most dangerous and "hottest" point of all, the end of the world.



in the rationality of the Logos, which one would have expected in the circumstances, as the natural contemporary substitute for the work of the Spirit<sup>(119)</sup>. Greek theology in general has always been more inclined to take these things for granted than Latin and Western theology, which has always given intensive study to everything connected with the individual Christian. In this case, too, it is likely that Athanasius was expressing the general feeling of relief and euphoria following the end of the age of heathen persecution - in which case the later life of Athanasius was one of the supreme ironies of history. He himself testifies all through his writings what a painful shock it was to find the old intrigues and persecutions being duplicated during the Arian controversy. The strongest feature of these chapters is that, by bringing the human results of the Resurrection into close contact with the Resurrection as a whole, Athanasius takes another step towards the doctrine of the exalted humanity of Christ as the anacephalaisis of what ours is to be, but as yet it is nothing like as well-developed as it was in Irenaeus, as it later became in the Contra Arianos, or as the other aspects of the Atonement were in this very book.

This is the end of the main body of the De Incarnatione. There are two passages, at the end of chs. 31 and 32 respectively, which are fair summaries of the above chapters, and of the work as a whole.

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(119) Böhringer, op.cit.123-42, complains in a way quite rightly that Athanasius has no doctrine of how the reconciliation in Christ becomes general for every man. Roman Catholics have also remarked on the inadequacy of this section. Bernard, op.cit.81, comments on the lack of any treatment of either faith, hope or love. Gross "La Divinisation du Chrétien d'après les Pères grecs" (Athanasius pp.201-218) points out, p.210, that owing to the undeveloped state of the theology of "person" "nature" etc. Athanasius cannot yet see clearly that the divinisation of the nature of man does not yet automatically entail the divinisation of each human person.



Ch.31 end: "But he who is incredulous of the Resurrection of the Lord's body (τοῦ κυριακοῦ σώματος), would seem to be ignorant of the power of the Word and Wisdom of God. For if He took to Himself a body at all, and appropriated it as His own (ἰδιοποιήσατο) - in reasonable consistency, as our argument has shown - what was the Lord to do with it? Or what was to be done with the body, when the Logos had once descended upon it? For it could not but die, inasmuch as it was mortal, and so that it could be offered unto death on behalf of all: . . . But it was impossible for it to remain dead, because it had been made the temple of life. . . While it died as mortal, it came to life again by reason of the Life in it: and of its Resurrection the works are a sign."

The passage at the end of ch.32, summarising the whole work: "As then the demons confess Him, and His works bear witness day by day, it must be evident . . . both that the Saviour raised His own body, being from Him, that is, from the Father, His own Logos and Wisdom and Power, Who in later ages took a body for the salvation of all, and taught the world concerning the Father and brought death to nought, and bestowed incorruption on all by the promise of the Resurrection, having raised His own body as first fruits of this, and having displayed it by the sign of the Cross as a monument of victory over death and its corruption."

There are many striking differences in the terminology for the Second Person in these twelve chapters (Migne, ½ times 20 cols.) compared with the first twenty (Migne ½ times 36 cols.). Logos: L. of God (τοῦ Θεοῦ etc.): 21:133B (Lord not weak, but Θε. Λ. καὶ συναντισ). 21:133B alterum: (He was Θε. Λ. and Life,



therefore implicitly immortal). 23:136D (Ld. to be believed to be  $\Lambda$ .  $\Theta$ . through miracles). 31:149C (disbeliever in Resurrection ignorant of power of  $\Lambda$ . and Wisdom of God. Origin of Logos:  $\text{ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς}$ : 32:152C (to be believed as such owing to Resurrection). L. dwells (in man, in body, etc.): 26:141C. Perfections of the Logos's human and divine natures (actually only Divine): 22:133D (Life, so immortal) 22:136A (Death did not show weakness of the L,) 26:141A (L. waited a day before Resurrection. 25:140C (The Ld. being Logos did not need opening of gates.) The total number of uses is only nine, as against 67 in the first part of the book, one quarter of the former density. Of these, two refer to the Incarnation as an event (including the actual raising of the Body) with the Logos as subject, and seven to the Logos as Hypostasis of the Incarnate Christ; these are the changes that would be expected when the treatment of the issue is purely factual and no longer aetiological.

There are only four references to the title Son: 26:141C (on the third day showed His body) 30:149A (spirits' confession of Christ as Son of God). 31:149C (continuation of work of the Son in our era.) 32:152C (known as such by raising His own body). 31:149C is in a separate group, as it raises the question of the continuance of the work of the Son in our day, and the present lack of a doctrine of the Spirit; two refer to the Incarnation (actually Resurrection) as an act, and one to the Hypostasis of the Incarnate Christ.

$\text{Κύριος}$ , Lord: Equal to Father in nature: 21:133B (Lord not weak but Logos of God and Power). 25:140C (for the same reason did not require the gates of Heaven to be opened.) Incarnate Christ: 21:133C (not fitting that the Ld. fall sick). 21:133C alterum (body



did not perish because of the Ld. that bore it). 22:136A (aim of Ld. was Resurrection of the body). 25:140A (Ld. *καλῶς* endured for our sake). 25:140A Alterum (Ld's death). 25:140A tertium (it was fitting that the Ld. endured . . .). 25:140B (Ld. came down to overthrow the Devil). 25:140C (Ld. suffered this death). 31:149C (what was the Ld. to do? - i.e. with His body). 24:137C (Our Ld. J. Cht. did not devise a death for His own body). There are twelve references here, as against thirteen in the first 20 chapters; here, none refer to the function of Lordship or the general majesty of God, as is the case invariably in the earlier section, but here it is always a title. In five instances it refers to the Incarnate Christ in the Synoptic sense, in two to the Second Person as Agent of the Incarnation with-sequelae, in two more to the Incarnation as considered perspectively and in three to the Hypostasis of the Incarnate Lord.

*Σωτήρ*, Saviour: 21:132C (the common Saviour of all has died on our behalf). 21:132D (death having been brought to nought *κατὰ τὴν τοῦ Σωτήρος χάριν*). 21:133A (what was done by (*ὑπὸ*) the S. is truly divine). 22:136A (the Cross showed Him to be S. and Life). 28:136A alterum (S. came to . . . abolish the death of men). 24:137B (whatever death others offered to the S.). 26:141A (S. waited a day after Cross). 26:141C (that death might be done away by the power of the S.) 27:141D (*ἡπρὶν τὴν Θεϊὰν ἐπιδημίαν τοῦ Σ*). 27:141D (S. resurrected His body). 27:144A (Resurrection - gen. abs. - *παρὰ τοῦ Σ. γενομένης*). 27:144B (death . . . conquered *διὰ τοῦ Σ* on the Cross). 28:144C (victory won over death *παρὰ τοῦ Σ*). 29:145B (after the sojourn of the S.). 29:145C (the saving *ἐπιφάνεια* in the body of the S.). 29:145C alterum (S. appeared *ἐν σῶματι*). 30:148B (Resurrection accomplished by the common S. of all). 30:148C (now that the S. works such great things in men). 31:149B (S. does daily so many works - i.e. now). 31:149D (S. prepared a body for Himself). 32:152C (S. raised His own body). Twenty



references, or four times the density of the former part. Of these, two refer to the work of the Saviour in men in this age, and therefore are to be laid on one side, two to the Second Person prospectively Incarnate (incl. 21:132D,) 12 to the Second Person as Agent of the Incarnation and its sequelae, two to the Second Person as the Hypostasis of the Incarnate Christ and two to the Incarnate Christ in the Synoptic sense.

The differences between the terminology for the Second Person as such in the two sections so far are of great interest. The distribution according to our own more formal scheme is undoubtedly due to the difference in subject matter, but of greater interest is the fact that in this section, (which refers to the work of Christ considered as straightforward event, especially the Crucifixion and Resurrection, and not considered aetiologically, Logos recedes into the background, although there is no tendency for it to be replaced by the title Son; the titles of preference are Jesus, Christ, Lord, Saviour.)

On the other hand, the Christological usages concerning the Humanity of Christ are not so markedly different; *Σῶμα* body, is still the main term. On Müller's classification (approx.): "Christ's own b.: 21:133C (b. is of the very Life). 22:133D (not fitting that Christ should have given His own b. to death). 23:136C (hypothetical possibility of hiding the b. rejected). 25:140C (Chr. carried us up through His own b.). Creaturely features: 21:133C bis (natural weakness not to be manifested). 21:133C (Chr. hungered *ἵνα τὸ ἰδίον τὸ σῶμα*). Mortal: 21:132C. Affections etc.: 22:133D (possibility rejected of keeping the b. altogether from death.) 22:136A bis (did not lay aside His body). 22:136B (hypothetical possibility of b. succumbing to disease rejected). 31:149C (what would be the end of the body? - i.e. both mortal and destined for



immortality). Second Pers. gives b. to death: 21:133A. Death of body: 29:145B. 21:133A (hypothetical possibility rejected that it would be more fitting to lay it aside honourably). 21:133B (- - - and also to die in bed). 22:136A (He meets death in His own body). 22:136A (the Ld's body having such an end). 24:137B (death came to b. from hostile counsels). 24:137C (death did not come from Himself, but . . .). 26:141B (shows real death of the b.) 26:141C (dies not through any natural weakness). 26:141C (showed immortal and incorruptible τὸ γενόμενον νεκρὸν σῶμα. 26:141C (b. died not through any natural weakness). 26:141B (witness of the death τοῦ κυριακοῦ σώματος). 26:141A (show that the b. is really dead). Second Pers. has body: 21:133C, takes (λαμβάνειν) b. 31:149C, 32:152C bears (φέρει) b.: 26:141C (excludes bearing of another b.). Glorification of b.: 21:133B. 22:136A and B. 23:137A (incorruption of). 26:141A (could have raised it at once but waited). 26:141A alterum (bearing τὴν ἐν τῷ σώματι γενομένην ἀφθαρσίαν καὶ ἀπαθείαν). 27:141D (Ch. resurrects body). 30:148B quater (2 accs. 2 gens.; in one case κυριακὸν σ.). 31:149C bis (Res'n of body, both gens.; in one case κυριακὸν σ.). 32:152C ter (incl. one instances in first sentence of ch.33 which belongs in this section) (2 accs. one gen.).

The total number of instances is 44 a much greater density than in the earlier portion of the work, which is probably natural considering that the subject matter here is Death and Resurrection. In seven cases the word is subject of a verb (or is the equivalent subjective genitive) which is active in form, but materially passive, denoting external activity; in six cases, it is the object, linguistically of external activity; in 28 cases it is the direct object of the activity of the Logos in the Incarnation and its sequelae, particularly in this case the Cross and Resurrection; in two cases the Second Person acted through,



in, or by, the body (in one case it was a passion and not an action - hunger), and in one case the Body is the body of Christ, i.e. of the Life, which we can by courtesy classify with the *ὡς ζωοποιος* activities of the Logos. This does not show a great difference except that due to the nature of the subject matter.

There are only three other references to the Humanity of Christ, *σωμα*, body, enjoying the overwhelming predominance; *ναος*, temple, 26:141A and 31:149D, and *ὄργανον*, organ or instrument, 22:136B.

33 Athanasius has now concluded the expository part of the book,  
40 and now turns to refuting the arguments of the Jews and the Greeks against the Incarnation, beginning in the next eight chapters with the Jews. The Jews are entirely refuted out of the Old Testament and its traditional testimonies; the Greeks by arguments which are often *prima facie* metaphysical, cosmological, and rational, where they are not simply an appeal to the sheer facts of Church history, but which often bear a striking resemblance to the aetiological sections in chs.1-20. This is of course in accord with the general character of the two groups of adversaries, but the young Athanasius virtually stylizes them. In this regard, he is in an even more extreme case than Justin, who is often held to make an excessive division between the material with which he refutes the Jews and that addressed to the Greeks <sup>(120)</sup>. In subject matter, the Jewish section is less integrated with the rest of the work, and less consonant with it, than the section on the Refutation of the Greeks, since the former is the only section in the whole of Athanasius in which the argument

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(120) Cf. the Argument from Jewish prophecy in Apol.I:38-53, addressed to the Gentiles.



from prophecy plays a major part, or any part at all. The usual title for Christ is as the subject, understood, of a verb. The title Logos is again fairly important, but there is no cosmological reference; the lack of the use of the terms "Messiah" and its Greek equivalent "Christ" is noteworthy even on superficial examination. The picture is of a stylized refutation of the Jews which does not really penetrate into the heart of the Jewish position, or of the Jewish aspect of Christianity. On the other hand, we must observe with pleasure that is 38:161B, Isaiah 45:1-2 must refer to the Logos described as such, but this Logos, though incorporeal by nature, appeared in a body and suffered (*παθὼν*) on our behalf. This shows that Athanasius, when confronted with Scripture, is prepared to speak of the real suffering of the Logos in the ordinary way. But there is another deficiency here in this section; there is not one reference still, to the Holy Spirit, which is actually a declension from the traditional role of the Spirit as the Inspirer of Scripture, especially Old Testament testimony to Christ <sup>(121)</sup>.

The lexicographic analysis of these sections is as follows:

Second Person: Logos: called God in the same sense as Father: 37:160C  
 (only God the L. fulfilled Scriptural prophecy of Christ). 39:164B  
 (Jews deny τὸν λόγον Θεὸν παραχέχεν ὁ Θεός). 40:165A (Fall of  
 Jerusalem sign of the παρουσία τοῦ Θ. Λ. (i.e. incarnate presence)).  
 Origin: Logos of God: 38:161B (plus having appeared ἐν σῶματι and  
 having suffered . . .). 38:164A (plus ἐν σῶματι παρήμενος). 40:165C

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(121) Cf. especially Justin, Apol. I:38-53 and Dial. c. Trypho Judae's, passim; also Irenaeus. Adv. Haer. esp. Book IV: 20, and also Book III.1 for Holy Spirit as inspirer of the Apostolic Witness.



(. . (God) . . . Whose Logos the Jews dishonoured). *ἐνανθρώπησις τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου*: 33:152D. Descends from Heaven: 37:160C. Jesus Christ Logos made flesh: 40:169B (Gentiles converted *διὰ τοῦ Λόγου*, our Lord Jesus Christ). Same Logos author of our reconciliation: 34:153D (marvel at the *φιλανθρωπία* of the Logos). Of these ten instances, one refers to the work of the Logos after the Incarnation 40:165D is best classified as the Person of the Incarnate Logos, and the other eight all refer to the Logos as the Agent of the Act of Incarnation, or its sequelae.

→ There is actually no reference at all to the title Son.

As for the other terms: *Σωτήρ*, Saviour: 33:153A (*ἐνανθρώπησις* of). 35:156C (sojourn of). 37:160C (no one can expound the *κατὰ σάρκα γενεά* of). 38:161D (the miracle *παρὰ τοῦ Σ.*, i.e. the restoration of a person to his original state). 40:165B (says, Matt.11:13). Three refer to the Synoptic Christ, and two to the Second Person as Agent of the Incarnation as an Act. "Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" appears in catenae, 37:160C and 40:168B, see above, and the only other instances of *Κύριος*, Lord, are 33:153B, where "the Lord" is He who should come according to Is.19:1, and in 37:161A and 40:165C, where "the Lord" works in this day to stop idolatry. These are not statistically significant examples.

As for the Christology, the prevailing word is again, as usual, *σῶμα*, body, for the Humanity of Christ: 37:161A (gave His own body to death). 37:161A (came down *τῷ σώματι*). 38:161B (manifested in body). Origin of Body: 37:160C (indicated by Star). 37:160C and 35:156D (each from Virgin). 40:165C (appeared *σώματι Κυρίου*). These are not statistically significant, but do not greatly differ from the usual pattern. As for the other words, Organ, Temple, House



are wanting; ἄνθρωπος, man: 33:153C (φαίνεται ἄνθρωπος), and 37:160C (προελθὼν καὶ ἄνθρωπος), and in the classification of Müller, Truly human and divine, the expression οὐχ ἀπλῶς ἄνθρωπος (but rather Divine) occurs twice (37:160B and 39:164C). This is a pointed reminiscence of the occurrences of this word in the first twenty chapters. Ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ occurs twice, 33:152D and 153A. More interesting perhaps is the first occurrence of the word σὰρξ, flesh, but only in the phrase κατὰ σὰρκα applied to Christ's generation, that is, His patrilineal descent (37:160C ter, 40:165C).

With the next section, the Refutation of the Greeks, we shall return to a more detailed examination, for two reasons: first, it once again treats the Incarnation as a problem requiring detailed description and argument, as distinct from a factum brutum, as was the tendency in the last eight chapters; secondly, in this section Athanasius makes contact with the Greek Logos philosophy, which is a matter of great interest. This results in a far greater density of references to the Second Person as Logos, and to a further treatment of such important issues as the cosmological status of the Logos and its relation to the Body of Christ. For the last twenty chapters, these issues have been in abeyance, or have been brought up in a summary way without the introduction, properly, of new arguments. In following through these chapters, we shall examine any new material in detail, and note, in less detail, agreements and disagreements with the earlier parts of the book.

4. The next two chapters are the most important in the Refutation of the Greeks, since Athanasius considers the philosophical objections to the Logos being incarnate in the man Jesus. After pointing out that it would be pointless to continue the argument if the very existence



of a Logos were denied, he continues (at 168C): "But if they confess that there is a Logos of God, and He Ruler of the Universe, and that in Him ( $\tilde{\epsilon}\nu$  - note the preposition; cf. the language of the Spirit in Eps. ad Serap. passim) the Father has produced the creation, . . . so that from the works of providence He is known, and through Him the Father . . . (they have no case) . . . The philosophers of the Greeks say that the universe is  $\sigma\upsilon\mu\mu\acute{\alpha}\mu\epsilon\gamma\alpha$  (123) and rightly so. For we see it and its parts as  $\tau\alpha\iota\varsigma \alpha\iota\sigma\theta\eta\sigma\epsilon\sigma\iota\nu \epsilon\pi\iota\theta\eta\tau\acute{o}\nu\tau\alpha$  (= subsumed under the senses, i.e. as sense). If then the Logos of God is in the universe, which is a body, and has united Himself with the whole and all its parts, what is there surprising or absurd if we say that He has united Himself (part of  $\epsilon\pi\iota\beta\alpha\iota\nu\epsilon\iota\nu$  in each case) with ( $\tilde{\epsilon}\nu$  + dat.) man also? For if it were absurd for Him to have been in a body at all, it would be absurd for Him to be united with ( $\epsilon\pi\iota\beta\epsilon\beta\eta\kappa\epsilon\iota\mu\epsilon\iota$ ) the whole either . . . For the whole is also a body. But if it is fitting for Him to unite Himself ( $\epsilon\pi\iota\beta\alpha\iota\nu\epsilon\iota\nu$ ) with the universe, and to be made known in the whole, it must also be fitting for Him to appear in a human body, and that by Him it should be illuminated and enlightened. For mankind is part of the whole as well as everything else. And if it be unseemly for a part to have been adopted as His instrument to teach men of His Godhead, it must be most absurd that He should be made known even by the whole universe.

42 For just as, while the whole body is quickened and illuminated  $\epsilon\pi\acute{o}\tau\epsilon\iota \tau\omicron\upsilon \lambda\upsilon\theta\rho\acute{\omega}\mu\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma$  (i.e. by the soul or person of the man), one

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(123) Great Body = i.e. a macrocosm of the body (as microcosm)



would be thought foolish if he said that it was absurd that the power of man should be found even in the too, . . . thus he who grants that the Logos of God is in the whole, and that the whole is illuminated and moved by Him, should not think it absurd that a single human body should also receive movement and light from Him. But if it is because the human race is a thing created out of nothing that they regard the manifestation of the Saviour in man, . . . as unseemly, it is high time for them to eject Him from creation also; for it too has been brought into existence through the Logos *ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος*. But if, even though creation originates it is not absurd that the Logos is in it, then neither is it absurd for Him to be in man. For whatever idea they form of the whole, they must necessarily apply the like idea to the part. . . . So, then, what is there to ridicule in what we say, if the Logos used that in which the Logos was as an instrument for manifestation? . . . (Although, since He was in everything, He could have used anything) . . . He used as His instrument a human body to manifest the truth and knowledge of the Father. For humanity, too, is an actual part of the whole. And as mind (*ὁ νοῦς*), pervading man all through, is indicated by a part of the body, that is, the tongue, without anyone saying that the essence of mind is on that account lowered, so if the Logos, pervading all things, used a human instrument, this cannot appear unseemly . . ."

To be perfectly frank, Athanasius does not prove his case at all, if he is considered in the light of Greek philosophy at its best. These two chapters are in fact the weakest that he ever wrote, and in them he has missed the most important point, even if it is one concerning which Greek philosophy has nearly always been



(124)  
 misrepresented . Even though the idea of radical progress was beyond it, Greek philosophy was, in spite of the line taken by its critics, not based on a static view of reality. This applies at the very beginning of philosophy, with Thales; the very reason why Thales chose water as the universal substantialist substrate of all things was precisely because water froze and melted, evaporated and condensed, that is, because water would enable him to give some account of change and difference. The criticisms of Anaximander and Anaximenes (replacing water by, respectively, The Unlimited and Air) were due to the fact that many changes and differences among things had obviously nothing to do with water at all. The other pre-Socratic philosophies were all attempts to answer the same questions now that Substantialism in its original Milesian form was rightly discredited. This applies specially to the Logos doctrine of Heraclitus, which was notoriously an attempt to account for the very universality of change which made Milesianism impossible. The same applies, in a left-handed way, even to Parmenides (and the modern Bradley), who postulated his One Entity precisely because to his own satisfaction he had been unable to account for motion, change, difference, and - most important, - the contiguity of distinct things. Owing to a weak spot in the logic of that time (actually, the lack of a doctrine of negation), Parmenides's arguments largely carried the day, and, seen against this background, the Doctrine of Forms of the Platonic Socrates, which has been so often criticised because of its "static" character, was really an attempt to do what it claimed to do, *αἰθεῖν τὰ φαινόμενα*, the phenomena of change and difference which Parmenides had dismissed as totally unreal. The struggle against

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(124) Cf. for the pre-Socratics. Burnet "Early Greek Philosophy"



Parmenides and the Eleatics was in the forefront of the post-Socratic writings of Plato. Aristotle's great interests were description, that is, generic relationship and differentiation, causality, and "physics", that is, a dynamic account of motion and change. Most important of all, the Stoics' decisive argument for the *Λόγος πνευματικός* is precisely the universal interaction of all matter and all things, so that the number of ultimate or co-ultimate powers cannot be greater than one. The real question for Athanasius, then, is not whether the Logos, so understood, can be incarnate at all, but whether it must not be "incarnate" in everything in the same way, since it represents the highest level of generality. (In other words, the scandal of the Incarnation would be its particularity and not its possibility.) A Logos that was peculiarly incarnate in the man Jesus would on this argument not have the maximum generality, and in fact would need a higher Logos to account for its relations and interactions with the rest of the universe. Possibly, some people were later attracted into Arianism by this argument, which seems to be reflected in the doctrine of Asterius the Sophist of the other Logos - Wisdom - behind the Christian Logos - Wisdom (125) - although for the Arians in general the Logos that was called a creature was in fact the universal cosmological Logos. Be that as it may, it is not altogether obvious that a Logos that can manifest itself through creation as a whole can also be incarnate in the sense and in the manner essential to Christian faith. What these two chapters show is the degeneration of Greek philosophy in Athanasius's day; the forms in which non-Christian learning would have confronted Athanasius were Neo-Platonism and a revival of the

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(125) Cf. C.Ar.I:31-32 and II:37-40.



Platonic Socrates, especially, both of which, in the form that they took, would have obscured the points raised above and deflected interest towards the direction followed in the above extract. For a long time the Church was not completely aware of the danger to which we have alluded. But the full extent of the danger became evident as soon as there was a revival of the Greek Logos-philosophy, which took place in Hegel. (The consequences were immediate - a denial of the uniqueness of the Incarnation, in Hegel and among extreme Liberal theologians alike.)

Other points of interest in this chapter are; Athanasius's partiality for body, *σῶμα* and instrument, *ὄργανον* as descriptions of the humanity of Christ, and his admission of the validity of the psychological analogy. What is if anything more important, he shows that it was still an important and extant principle of Greek thought.

43 Athanasius now asks why He did not appear as one of the nobler parts of the universe, e.g. one of the heavenly bodies. The answer is that Christ came to save, not to dazzle men with glory. The further reason is introduced, that "nothing in creation had gone astray, save man alone . . . Fittingly, then, since it was unworthy of the Divine goodness to overlook so grave a matter, while yet men are not able to recognise Him as ordering and guiding the whole He takes to Himself as an instrument a part of the whole, His human body, and unites Himself with that, in order that since men could not recognise Him in the whole, they should not fail to recognise Him in the part; and since they could not look upon His invisible power, might be able at any rate from what resembled themselves to deduce (*λογίζασθαι*) and contemplate Him. For men as they are, they will be able to know His Father more



(126)

quickly and directly through a body of like nature and by the Divine works wrought through it, judging by comparison that they are not human, but the works of God, which are done by Him. And if it were absurd . . . for the Logos to be known through the works of the body, it would be likewise absurd for Him to be known through the works of the whole. For just as He is in creation and yet does not partake (μεταλαμβάνει) at all of it but rather all things partake (μετέχει) of His power, even so, while using the body as an instrument, partook of no corporeal property (127) but rather sanctified the body . . ." (In view of Plato, Polit.273D, what is incredible about the Logos coming among His own to save them?)

This interesting chapter confirms what has gone before, notably the tendency of Athanasius to use instrumentalist language about the Body of Christ, especially when he is writing with Greek concepts in mind. There is also his equivocal position with regard to natural theology, and more than a hint is again given that it is more correct to know the Logos through the whole, that is, virtually philosophically, than by the Incarnation. The conclusion of the chapter indicates the difficulties that he would have had in expressing the later Chalcedonian Christology. The reason is his use of the Platonic concept of "participation", which we have already discussed above. Unfortunately, it is the normal equivalent, in the Platonic Socrates, of predication, and thus, if Athanasius were to enunciate the Chalcedonian Christology using this vocabulary, he would be virtually saying that Christ were inferior to the Form or Notion of Humanity. That is why Athanasius

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(126) διὰ τοῦ καταλήλου σώματος.  
 (127) οὐδενὸς τοῦ σώματος μετείχεν.



must make statements which make it appear to us that he is denying the real humanity of Christ. On the other hand, if we defend Athanasius from this imputation, we should also have to doubt Athanasius's statements about the Logos being in nature yet not participating in it<sup>(128)</sup>, or at any rate doubt whether they were an adequate denial of natural theology, say, as understood by Karl Barth, (since "participating in creation" would mean that the Logos was actually inferior to creation). The statement that the Logos, or Reason, was in nature but not of it, but rather vice versa, is one that can be made not only by Athanasius but also by Hegel, or even Aristotle.

The positive interest in this chapter is that here Athanasius, more strongly than anywhere in the book, described the aspect of redemption which has been described as the equivalent of the Old Testamental Redemption by the  $\text{בן אדם}$ , or kinsman<sup>(129)</sup>. This principle has already been used but, to a large extent, only in the context of punishment. It has already been emphasised that Christ had to come as man so that the Death of Christ could stand summarily for the deserved death of all men. The other side of this principle, that Christ had to come as man because, (as the later Fathers always said, what He did not take He could not redeem,) is evident here, but in general in the De Incarnatione, it does not play the part in Athanasian theology as yet that has been often supposed. About the use of the same principle with reference to the revelational work of Christ nothing more need be said, except that Athanasius here explicitly states what was implicit in his former view, that the humanity of Christ has an

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(128) See above De Inc. 17

(129) As in, e.g. Ruth ch. 4



essentially negative function in this respect, that is, the function of offsetting the works of Christ, of providing a contrasting and not a harmonious background.

44 The next chapter is important in that it helps us to fix the meaning of the word "Logos" for Athanasius. He considers the question whether "God, if He wished to save and re-form men, should have done so by a mere fiat (*νεύματι*), without His Logos taking a body, . . . as . . . when He produced them ex nihilo. (The answer is that) . . . formerly, nothing being in existence at all, what was needed to make the universe was a fiat and the bare will (*βουλήσεως*) to do so. But when men had been made and necessarily demanded a cure, not for things that were not, but for things that had come to be, it naturally followed that the Physician and Saviour should appear in what had already come to be in order to cure the things that were. *ἔχονε δὲ ἀνθρώπου*, therefore he used his body as a human instrument. For if this were not the right way, how was the Logos, desiring to use <sup>(130)</sup> an instrument, to appear? Or whence was He to take it, save from those already in being, and in need of His Godhead through one like themselves? For it was not things without being that needed salvation, that it might be merely a case of a command (*προσταξεί*), but man, already in existence, was going to corruption and ruin. It was then natural and right that the Logos should use a human instrument, and reveal Himself everywhere. Secondly, . . . the corruption which had set in was not external to the body, but had become attached to it; and it was required that, instead of corruption,

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(130) διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἀνθρωπίνῳ ὀργάνῳ κέχρηται τῷ σώματι.  
The Benedictine Latin for the three words left untranslated "At qui factus erat (Sc. Logos) homo", followed by Robertson, is almost certainly wrong. The context indicates that the meaning is. "Now. man had come to be".



life should cleave to it; so that, just as death had been engendered in the body, so life may be engendered in it also . . .

(Athanasius concludes by saying that the body must be virtually death-proofed by putting on the Incorporeal Logos after the fashion of I Cor.15:54, even as asbestos is fire-proof.)

Besides repeating and summarising various aspects of the Incarnation and the Atonement, including the ontological resemblance between Christ and our humanity, Athanasius emphasises that man cannot be set right by a mere fiat, by  $\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$ , which is thus established as having a meaning quite different from that of  $\Lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ . This is significant, because when most theologians think of creation as being through the Word, per Verbum,  $\delta\iota\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \Lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\upsilon$ , they automatically think of it as meaning by fiat,  $\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\tau\iota$ . This is of course a most essential element in the doctrine of God the Creator, which Athanasius is the first to acknowledge; in fact, it is an immediate corollary of the creatio ex nihilo. But this is evidently not what Athanasius means by creation  $\delta\iota\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \Lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\upsilon$ . [The Logos in this case must be either the old Alexandrian cosmic intermediary, hypostatically distinct, and/or the Greek rational principle behind the universe. On this basis,  $\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$  and Incarnation appear as two ways of working of this Logos, with the pre-lapsarian grace of the Logos occupying an intermediate position. The former of these two extreme ways was necessary and appropriate for creation, the latter for reconciliation. The position is, apparently, that a fault in a thing that has already come to be cannot be corrected by fiat, but requires more drastic measures. This is most inadequate. It is a curious inversion of the incorrect view that all Christian theology has rejected, that God is competent only to modify pre-existent matter. Of course, Athanasius says that God has the power to make such modifications, but the point is that His creative power is



insufficient to remedy a weakness or even a perverse functioning of man, different powers being necessary.] It would appear that the power of God to create out of nothing would, a fortiori, be sufficient for God to make any necessary modifications and improvements, and if He could create by fiat, He would also have an unlimited power of changing created things by fiat. After all, the power of changing and improving other things is something relatively within the power of men as such, in a way that creatio ex nihilo is utterly beyond us. Unfortunately, the only answer that is given to this problem is the old one that sin and corruption involved the whole of humanity as such, an explanation which overvalues humanity as a sort of concrete universal, or even matter as a whole. It is as if the very lack of "physicism" in creatio ex nihilo made it too easy to accept this sort of physical explanation as applied to reconciliation, at the very point where the objections are strongest. It is clear here, as nowhere else, (that the only possible sort of solution is that of Anselm, that the reason for the extreme measures that God took was the fact that sin, as an affront to His Divine Majesty, in that sense partakes of the very infinity of God Himself. Athanasius's talk about corruption is admittedly an attempt to carry the matter as far as possible, but it would be seriously stretching the evidence to say that he had arrived at a perfectly adequate solution.)

45 This chapter is a recapitulation of what has gone before, especially about God taking a human body as His instrument, wherewith Christ appeared everywhere and in every type of circumstance, so that those who could not see the Logos in creation in general would see His Deity on being confronted with His works.



46-  
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These eight chapters are largely a repetition and amplification of chapters 27-32, and they deal with the effects of the Incarnation. The chief topics are the suppression of demons, magicians, and of idolatry, and the ethical results, especially chastity as opposed to immorality, and war as opposed to peace and public order. For a Church that was never so ethically individualist as later Western Churches, the ethics are fairly adequate. There is rather more emphasis on asceticism than most of us would consider desirable, but the alternative was probably not the wholesome enjoyment of God's gifts but the gross immoralities and callous cruelties of contemporary heathen society. However, we must observe once again that things seem to be too simple. [There is still no mention whatever of the work of the Holy Spirit. These miraculous results in human life as a whole, along with the miracles of Christ's own incarnate life, are in general treated as direct results of the incarnate presence of the Logos, and of course are stated, with the greatest emphasis, to be not human but divine works.] There is very little about the way in which the power of God is mediated in the world. Demons, etc., are suppressed by making the Sign of the Cross (47:180C, 48:181B, 50:185C) or by taking the Name of Christ (48:184A, 50:185B-C). The spread of the influence of the Logos throughout the world is by preaching. This is so important that the relevant passages will be cited in full: (47:181A) (in contrast to the pretentious but unconvincing Greek sophists) . . . Christ alone, by ordinary language, and by ( $\delta\iota'$ ) men not clever with the tongue, has throughout all the world persuaded whole churches full of men to despise death . . ." (48:184D-185A) Or . . . what man's doctrine that ever was has prevailed everywhere . . .? Or why . . . is His worship not prevented by the gods they have from passing into the same land where they are? Or why on the contrary does the Logos



Himself, in His sojourn, stop their worship and put their deception to shame by His own teaching? (50:185B) But the Logos of God . . . teaching in meaner language (πτωχότεραις τῆς λέξεως), put the choice sophists in the shade . . . etc. . . ., (51:188A-B) (In contrast with the empty and ineffective moralising of everybody else, Christ) . . . not only preached through His own disciples but also carried persuasion to men's minds . . . (51:188C) But when they (sc. erstwhile fighters and idolaters) have come over to the school (διδασκαλίαν) of Christ . . . (they have really changed their life) . . . (52:189A) But when they hear the teaching of Christ . . . (the barbarians cease from their barbarous war). . . Now this is at once a proof of the divinity of the Saviour, since what man could not learn in idols they learnt from Him . . . It is evident from the above that the essential means by which the grace and power of Christ reaches men is His own self-proclamation, and that the essential mediate means is the preaching of the Word by Christians. (131) Bornhäuser is right in pointing out that these passages are decisive against the idea that the Athanasian soteriology was physiological and pharmacological, within the meaning attached by Harnack to these terms. However, it is by no means certain how this is to be interpreted, an issue which will be considered later. Even here it is in order to notice the absence of any sacramental emphasis. Incidentally, the references to the Second Person as Logos (46:177C and D bis, 47:180C bis and D bis, 48:184B, 49:184C and 185A bis, 50:185B, 53:189C and 192A) all refer, as usual, specially either to their fundamental Deity as distinct from His appearance in a human body, or to His work as regards the supersession of idols and demons.

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(131) "Die Vergottungslehre des Athanasius und Johannes Damascenus . . ." pp. 13-48.



54 The next two chapters are a summary of the whole work, the former  
55 of the early aetiological section, and the latter of the effects of the Incarnation in the world. The former will again be cited, since a summary is an excellent indication of what the author feels to be most important: "As, then, if a man should wish to see God, Who is

invisible by nature and not seen at all, he may know and apprehend Him by His works: so let him who fails to see Christ with his understanding (*τῇ διανοίᾳ*), at least apprehend Him by the works of the body, and test whether they be human works or God's works . . . (if, as is, the answer is the latter) . . . let him marvel that by so ordinary a means things divine have been manifested to us, and that by death immortality has reached to all, and that by the Logos becoming man the universal Providence has been known, and its Giver and Artificer the very Logos of God. For He

→ became man so that we might be made <sup>(132)</sup> God, and He manifested

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(132) *Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπησεν ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεωποιηθῶμεν.*

The most celebrated sentence in the book, perhaps in all Greek Patristics. The Euphuistic style was very popular in this field; the most famous instances of it being in the "Homily on the Passion" by Melito of Sardis, where however the antitheses are between the privileges of the Son by nature and the death He endured for us.

On Deification, see Harnack, Hist. Dogm. (E.T.): Vol. III: p. 164, n.: After Theophilus, Irenaeus, Hippolytus and Origen, it is found in all the Fathers of the ancient Church, and that in a primary position." Detailed Patristic references are also given here.

Shapland's footnote, on Ad Serap. I:24, is of interest: ". . . G.W. Butterworth, 'The Deification of Man in Clement of Alexandria', in J.Th. S. XVII p. 157 etc., argues strongly that *θεοποιεῖν* should always be translated, 'make . . . a god', not 'make divine'. The latter rendering is undoubtedly philologically inexact, and loses something of the force of the original. But the alternative carries with it to modern ears a suggestion of polytheism which was certainly not appreciated by the Christian writers who use the expression. If it owes something of its currency in the Church to the practice of deifying the emperors, it probably owes still more to popular pantheistic philosophy which reduced the gods either to symbols of an impersonal divine life, or else to beings not essentially different from men. But it is to its prevalence in the



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Himself by a body that we might receive the idea (ἐννοια) of the unseen Father, and He endured the insolence of men that we might inherit immortality. For while He Himself was in no way injured being impassible and incorruptible and Ἀτολότης of God, He maintained and preserved in His own impassibility men who were suffering, and for whose sakes He endured all this . . . (His works are too numerous to mention, but in fine) . . . wherever a man turns his glance, he may behold on that side the Divinity of the Logos, and be struck with exceeding great awe". There is a certain tendency to Euphuism which was traditional in Greek theological writing, and this makes it more difficult than usual to interpret this chapter, (but it confirms the suspicions that we have formed about natural theology, and the instrumentalist interpretation of the humanity of Christ.) Within it is the famous sentence that He became man, so that we might be deified, and this is the right place to discuss this in full. We can observe at the outset how naturally it falls into the Euphuistic pattern, and also how it masks the deficiencies of Athanasius's approach, at that time, to the Humanity of Christ, since that doctrine would not have the same urgency as it would normally have for Christians, if they believed that their destiny was to be literally divinised. But on the other hand, it comes from an earlier time when the distinction between God and creaturely reality was not nearly as sharp as it later became under the influence of the Arian controversy, even if, as Shapland says, its uses in the Mystery Religions would have made

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Mystery Religions that we must finally look for its prevalence in Christian terminology. (The evidence is set forth by S. Angus, 'The Mystery Religions and Christianity', pp.106-112.) The Church dared not claim less for the grace of God in Christ than the initiates claimed, but she was careful to maintain the 'otherness' of God and the personal relation between Him and the souls that partake His nature. The Arian controversy is itself the most eloquent testimony to this fact. It could



it impossible for Christianity to claim less. We have noticed how this idea of deification would have saved Athanasius from the worst consequences of the idea that the humanity of Christ was essentially passive, but for this very reason it would have helped to preserve this error, as well as obscuring the distinction between God and man. There appears to be a close relation between these two errors; it is no accident that the Arian controversy, with its renewed emphasis on the gulf involved in the creaturely relation, compelled Athanasius to elaborate the active humanity of Christ. When we have said all this in criticism of the concept, it remains a most important and useful one in theology, as long as it is not taken too literally. After all, by A A A Fig.1 Syllogism, anyone who acquires a privilege that is peculiar to God thereby becomes literally deified, and whatever flaw there may be in this reasoning, the term Θεοποίησις at least conveys the fulness of the grace and the privileges that are given in Christ.

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The last two chapters are the peroration, being an appeal to accept the benefits of Christ and live accordingly, in the light of the Last Judgment. This is the most direct reference to eschatology in the writings of Athanasius, and it is unfortunate and significant that it occurs in the peroration, after the summary of the body of the work. This is a legitimate criticism, even though the second Coming is formally presented as a subject for one's further study in the Faith. After all, even the Christological sections of the Creeds end not with the Resurrection but with the Last Judgment and the Eternal Reign. Also, the triumph of goodness would not have been such a simple matter in chs. 27-32 and 46-53 if they had been written with the Second Advent in mind. Athanasius may be erring in an extremely extensive company, but evidently eschatology is not fully integrated in his theological



mind. Such as it is, his eschatology is the normal and proper one of the Second Advent being a sort of negation of the negation of the First, the Son coming in glory instead of humiliation, to dispense the fulfilled benefits of incorruption and eternal life, instead of suffering death, to judge instead of being judged. The concluding doxology, at the end of c.57, is Trinitarian, and is literally the only reference to the Third Person in the book: "... (Jesus Christ & the Lord) . . . δι' οὗ καὶ μεθ' οὗ αὐτῷ τῷ Πατρὶ σὺν αὐτῷ τῷ Υἱῷ ἐν ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι be honour and might and glory for ever and ever, Amen."

This retains some trace of subordination of the Spirit, though none whatever of the Son, as the Father and Son are glorified in the Spirit, without the Spirit being glorified with (σὺν) the other Persons, as in the Niceano-Constantino-politan Creed. It gives some indication of the later formula, *ἐκ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, ἐν αὐτῷ Πνεύματι*, which was such a stock formula later in the Epistles to Serapion; it was probably familiar in his youth and even earlier.

As for the lexicographical analysis of these last 17 chapters, they appear to be substantially an average cross-section of the remainder of the book. First, the terms for the Second Person: Logos: L.called God in the same sense as the Father: 45:177A (He along among men is Θεὸν Λόγον: 46:177C (men deserted idols since the True τοῦ Θεοῦ, Θεοῦ Λόγος came among men). 47:180C (Only Christ among men known as Θεὸς ἀληθινὸς Θεὸς Θεὸς Λόγος). 49:184D (hypothesis rejected that He is only man and not Θεὸς Λόγος). 53:192A (works of Christ not human but of the Saviour of all, τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου). 55:193B (beholding His power in the world we are called to worship the Saviour καὶ Θεὸν Λόγον). 55:193B: ἐπιφάνεια of τοῦ Θεοῦ Λ. 55:193C (men turning their eyes to the True Θεοῦ Λ. of the Father). 55:193D (permanence of Christianity proof that Christ is Θεοῦ Λ. and Power of God).



55:193D alterum (for the same reason He is God and True Son of God and Only begotten L). 57:196C (call to learn about τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου).

Of these eleven references, none refer to the Logos in His creative capacity, apart from the Incarnation, or to the Incarnation considered prospectively or aetiologically. One definitely refers to the work after the Incarnation of Christ in the world, and two doubtful ones (55:193D and 57:196C) and best under the same classification. In three cases the Logos is the Agent of the Incarnation considered as a definite act, and in five the best approximation is definitely the Hypostasis of the Incarnate Christ.

Godhead (θεότης) of the L.: 45:177B (unfolded on every side). 54:193A (to be seen as a result of the works of Christ). Origin: L. of Father: 48:184B (superiority of doctrine proves that He is truly Son of G. being L. and Wisdom and Power of the F.) and see also above. L. of God: 41:168C bis (existence of hypothetically denied by certain people: context largely Greek philosophy). 45:176C (L. of G. took body). 44:176C (body puts on the incorporeality of L. of G.) 45:177B (from works in nature we may find the true L. of G.) 50:185B (teaching in meaner language the L. of G. cast Sophists into the shade). 53:189C (L. of G. known by works among men since A.D.) 54:192 (L. of G. is chorus-master and Artificer of the world). Work with God in creation: 42:169B (διὰ τοῦ Λόγου). 41:168C (ἐν αὐτῷ, i.e. the Logos). Same predicates as for the Creator applied to L. 43:172C (natural things obey L. perfectly). In the world as God: 42:169B and 169C bis (therefore, why not in man?) Of this rather less homogeneous group of 16 cases, two refer to the later works after the time of Christ, nine to the general cosmological and creative functions of the Logos, three to the Logos as Agent in the Incarnation and two to the Logos as the Hypostasis of the Incarnate Christ.



Logos takes body, etc.: 44:173B (hypothesis rejected that L. did not need to take body). 44:176A (similar hypothesis rejected that He came outside body). 46:177C 46:177D (τὰ θεοφάνεια τοῦ Λόγου γέγονεν ἐν ἀνθρώποις). Ἐνανθρώπησεν τοῦ Λ.: 54:192B, ἐπιδημεί: 47:180D and 49:185A. 42:169C (L. uses b. as instrument). Ἐμφάνειν τοῦ Λ.: 47:180A. παρουσία τοῦ Λ. (= incarnate presence): 47:180D. L. is in man: 42:169C. Ἐκάθισεν ἐπὶ ἀνθρωπότητα καὶ ἄνθρωπος ἐφάνη: 43:177A. Πληγίνεται (by taking body) 44:173C<sup>e</sup> reveals Himself + uses human instrument: 44:173C<sup>e</sup> appeared in body: 41:168C<sup>e</sup> known by works of b.: 43:173A. Of these sixteen cases that specially refer to the Incarnation, two, the first two, probably refer to the Incarnation considered prospectively, and the remainder to the Logos as Agent of the Incarnation as an act. There are two other references uncounted in this list: 46:177C (Logos, Power of God, master of demons, came down among men) and 48:184B (failure of paganism shows that He is true S. of G. even L. and Wisdom and Power of the F.) (The former being Logos as subject of the Incarnation and the latter referring to the continuous activity of the Logos after Pentecost).

Of the 45 references, in these 17 chapters, or  $\frac{1}{2}$  times 29 cols. in Migne, nine refer to the general functions of the Logos apart from the Incarnation, two to the Incarnation considered aetiologically or prospectively, 21 to the Logos as the Agent of the Incarnation considered as an act, seven to the Logos as Hypostasis of the Incarnate Christ; six refer to the work of the Logos as continuing after the Ascension and Pentecost, although these events are not mentioned.

Again, there are only six references to the title Son, including the doxology at the end of the work. The others are: 53:189D (crucified Saviour now generally confessed as S. of G.) (The other four are all proofs that the title S. of G. applies to Christ). 48:184B (failure of



paganism) 50:185D (Resurrection). 52:188C (achievements since life of Christ). 55:193D (permanence of Christianity).

Σωτήρ, Saviour: 42:169B (τὴν ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ τοῦ ἔπιφάνειαν). 44:173C (+ physician; appears in what exists). 44:176A (S. put on body). 45:176D (S. did this - i.e. the act of the Incarnation). 46:177 (manifested Himself). 47:180C (appeared among men). 48:181D (not a magician since He drives away demons). 48:184A (Ld. and Sav. Jesus Christ not a demon, since Name repels demons.) 49:184C (restores men to their nature). 49:184C alterum (S. + Ld. of all; teaches temperance). 50:185A (now brings men over from idols). 52:189A (Godhead of S. indicated by our ability to learn from Him). 53:189D (the S. crucified). 53:192A (the works of S. are those of God). 54:192C (S's. achievements immutable). 55:193A (τοῦ ἔπιδημήσαντος). 55:193A (S's. teaching now increasing). 51:188A (S's. teaching strengthens even children to virginity). 52:188C (only the beloved Son of the Father, the common Saviour of all. J. Cht. could have done this). 55:193B (S. to be worshipped; + δύνατον Θεὸν λόγῳ. There are 21 instances in all, a density intermediate between that of chs. 1-20 and 21-32. Of these eight refer to the Second Person as Agent of the Incarnation as an act, seven to the Second Person as Hypostasis of the Incarnate Christ, five refer to the later work of the Second Person, which probably ought to be attributed to the Spirit, and the remaining one to the Synoptic Saviour.

Κύριος, Lord: as Son is the equal of the Father in nature: 48:184B (who cured such diseases, but the common Ld. of all?) Incarnate Christ: 43:172B (came . . . to cure and teach). 44:176B (proved to be Life by the Resurrection of His own Body). 45:177A (Creator, shown by Christ's work). 45:177B (Resurrection proves Christ true Lord and God). 45:177B (Ld. touched all parts of creation). 46:177C (Ld. effected His



conquest of death). 46:180B (evokes worship of the entire world).  
 49:184C (+ Sav. teaches temperance). 49:184C (Ld. and Sav. J. Cht.  
 not demonic, since Name repels demons). 51:188A (Ld. of all, Power  
 of God, our Ld. J. Cht. has real power to inculcate virtue). 53:189C  
 (Our Ld. true Logos of God, has power to check demons, etc.) Doxology  
 57:197A. Of these twelve instances, six refer to the Second Person  
 as the Agent in the Incarnation and sequelae, considered as an Act,  
 two (although this is doubtful here) to the Second Person as Hypostasis  
 of the Incarnate Christ, and four to the later work in this age, of  
 Christ.

The Christological vocabulary of the Humanity of Christ is also  
 approximately the same as in the previous sections as a whole: *Σῶμα* :  
 body: 44:176A (hypothesis rejected that the Logos could come outside  
 the b.) 41:169A (*γίνεται ἐν σ.*). 43:172C (takes b. of man as  
 instrument). 45:176C (*ἐνέλαβε σ.*). 46:177C (*ἐλάβε σ.*). 49:184B  
 (formed b. from Virgin). 41:168C (manifested in body). 41:169A  
 (manifested in human b.) 42:172A (used b. of man as instrument).  
 42:172B (used b. as instrument). 43:173A (through works of the b.)  
 44:173C (used b. as human instrument). 43:172D (*διὰ τοῦ κατὰ ἡλίου  
 σώματος*). 43:173A (used b. as instrument). 44:176A and B (each  
 case, Sav. put on body). 44:176B (aimed to find death in His own b.)  
 49:184D (deeds *διὰ σ.*) and also 53:192A. 54:192B (works of b.)  
 54:192B alterum (manifested Himself through b.) 54:192C (achievements  
 of Christ in b.) 54:193C (appeared in b.) Glorification of b. i.  
 45:176C (vivification). 49:184D and 50:185C (Cht's. Resurrection).  
 Hypothesis that union between God and body is impossible is rejected:  
 44:176A. Of these 27 instances, 14 refer to the Second Person as  
 Subject with the body as direct object (even though not always in the  
 accusative in Greek), and the other 13 to the Second Person acting



through, with, or by (instrumental) the body. *Σάρξ*, flesh; *ναός*, temple; and *οἶκος*, house, are all lacking. *ὄργανον*, instrument, is used eight times, four of which (where the Second Person uses the body as an instrument) have been already cited, 42:172A, 43:172C and 173A. 44:173C. In 43:172B, the question is asked, and rejected, why the Second Persons did not use a nobler instrument than the human body, in 42:169A, the Gentile doctrine is rejected that it is unworthy of God to use such an instrument for manifestation and in 43:176C, He *ἐν Ἀνθρωπίνῳ ὄργανον* *κεχρηται*; and in 42:172A, the same expression is used except that instead of the adjective there is the genitive *Ἀνθρώπου*. All these refer to the Second Person considered as Agent of the Incarnation, with the Humanity of Christ as the (virtual) direct object (usually dative after *χρᾶσθαι*).

*Ἄνθρωπος*, man: 43:173A (*Ἀνθρώπου* *ἐτεφάνη*), 42:169B (the appearance of the S. *ἐν Ἀνθρώπῳ*). 41:169A (*ἐπιβαίνει ἐν αὐτῷ*). 48:184A (not simply man). 42:172A (used the instrument of man). 43:172 (appeared *Ἀνθρώπῳ* *μόνῳ*, as distinct from use of some higher means). 43:176C (worked *ἐν Ἀνθρώπῳ*). Of these seven uses, the last six refer to the Second Person as Agent of the Incarnation as an Act, and the first, as one might hope, is classified with the *ὡς Ἀνθρώπου* group. The expression "human instrument" is found three times, 42:172A 44:173C, 43:176C, "Human body", also three times, 41:169A, 42:169B, 43:172C. *ἐν Ἀνθρώπῳ* for the Incarnation occurs twice, 54:192B and C.

All this reveals no change in the basically instrumentalist approach to the Humanity of Christ.

In giving this resumé of the theology of Athanasius as in this book, we shall, according to our method, commence with the way in which the Persons of the Trinity in question are known to be God, or its



equivalent in the book in question. But the conditions are rather different here, since there is again virtually only one Person of the Trinity mentioned, the Logos, and the argument concerning the actual Deity of the Person concerned is at a minimum here. Insofar as it is in evidence at all, it is mainly a repetition of the natural theology of the "Contra Gentes", brought to a higher pitch of development (see chs. 11-12). As we have seen there are four ways of men knowing God, which apparently range continuously from the best and original way at the beginning to the ultima ratio at the end; these are: [the soul's direct vision of God in virtue of its being created in the image of God, objective natural theology, direct revelation as by the Old Testament Prophets and Patriarchs, and finally, because man was too wicked and lost for even this, the final expedient of the Incarnation.] Parallel to this, there is another element which is best seen in the opening chapter of the "Contra Gentes", which in some sense stands as an introduction to both works; "the sacred and inspired Scriptures are sufficient to declare the truth", but if one wished to object to this, on the basis, say, of Roman Catholic theology, it would be quite fair to point out that it is contextually part of a traditional polite apologia for the writing of yet another work on dogmatics. All in all, there is very little new material on this topic. We have already discussed the difficulties in the final position of Athanasius on the relation of natural theology to the Incarnation as elaborated in chs. 11-12.

As for the Persons of the Trinity, there is quite literally no reference at all to the Spirit in the "De Incarnatione", even in the most important sections on the way in which the work of Christ spreads out from Himself and His own time to other people and later times. The only reference is, in fact, in the doxology. In fact, the gravest



instance in all theology of the traditional minimisation of the Spirit and the transfer of its functions to the Logos is actually the "De Incarnatione" of Athanasius itself. On the theory of Cross that the first two works together constitute an academic apology, this indicates that there was no tradition of the Spirit in the academic theology of Alexandria. Other examples of the complete deficiency in the doctrine of the Spirit in fields in which it should have been present - all of which have been already noticed - are: no mention of the Spirit in connection with the Incarnation, the invariable type of expression being that the Logos "took" or "formed" a body from the Virgin (133); the general emphasis on the Logos as the Giver of Life, as compared with the Spirit's title of  $\tau\omicron\ \zeta\omega\omicron\tau\omicron\iota\omicron\upsilon\nu$  in the Nicaeano-Constantinopolitan Creed of 381, in which the life-giving function of the Logos is not described at all in so many words; the statements that the world is included  $\epsilon\nu\ \tau\eta\ \lambda\omicron\gamma\eta$  apparently in the sense of the stock formula  $\epsilon\nu\ \tau\eta\ \pi\acute{\nu}\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\tau\iota$  of the "Epistles to Serapion" (134); related to this there is the notion of men especially and other things as well participating in (the Platonic  $\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\chi\epsilon\iota\nu$  + gen.) the Logos directly, as distinct from mediate participation through the Spirit; the metaphor of sealing with the Image of God being directly associated with the Logos instead of directly with the Spirit and with the Logos mediately through the Spirit, as is the case not only in the Epistles to Serapion but also in the earlier Fathers generally; (135) finally,

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(133) See especially chs. 8 and 9, also Müller's references under "Logos" and also see above, p. 125.

(134) See ch. 17 and above p. 147-54. Compare Ep. I ad Serap. passim esp. ch. 31.

(135) See ch. 14 and above p. 134-6. Compare Ep. ad Serap. I: 23-25.



a complete silence on the Spirit as the Inspirer of Scripture or prophetic testimony, in spite of its great prominence in earlier tradition <sup>(136)</sup>. Of course, one cannot criticise Athanasius too much here. For instance, on the matter of life, there is after all John 1:4, in which the life-bearing and life-giving quality is specifically attributed to the Logos. But it would be impossible to solve this difficulty without a rigorous analysis of the relations both ontological and operational between Son and Spirit.

As to the Person of the Father, there is more than there is with the Spirit, and far more than there is in the "Contra Gentes" with the possible exception of the last eight chapters. But in general Athanasius's treatment justifies the statement of McIntyre that he finds the Greek Fathers (that is, from Athanasius inclusive onwards) to be at their weakest in the doctrine of God the Father, rather than in reconciliation (through the Son) where they have been so often criticised <sup>(137)</sup>. (Incidentally, is there any system of theology at all so far in which the Doctrine of the Father is really satisfactory?) In the "De Incarnatione", Athanasius does repeatedly refer to the Logos of the Father in a rather stylized and off-hand way, and also to the Logos, in His own revelation in one way or another, revealing the Father <sup>(138)</sup>. The most satisfactory account of the theology of the Father, fittingly enough, is contained in ch.7,

(136) See above p. 76, and references noted there.

(137) Paper presented at the "Society for the Study of Theology" 1953. The paper is published in the Scottish Journal of Theology, <sup>VI</sup>(1954) 353-359.

(138) See Müller's references. On the other hand in ch.17, Athanasius, in saying that the Logos is in the Father whereas the world is in the Logos, appears to express a certain subordination of the Logos to the Father.



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where Athanasius is Scripturally confronted with the real suffering of the Second Person and the real wrath of God in relation to His love, which do not easily reduce themselves to a rational system.

On the other hand, these passages are definitely outweighed by the passages that describe (passim) the Logos as self-originating His own activity, perhaps even in the sense denied in the Fourth Gospel (139)

It is this indefiniteness which makes it almost impossible to determine the exact sense in which the Logos is Logos of the Father.

The result of this could, for large parts of the "De Incarnatione" be described as a sort of Sabellianism of the Logos or Second Person, in the way that Sabellianism itself was of the First Person or all three Persons co-ordinately. This is a problem of considerable historico-critical importance. There is a tendency to consider that Athanasius began his theological career as a subordinationist of the later Origenist type, (and that he was not really a leading figure at <sup>resting</sup> ~~Nicaea~~, where the principals in the struggle for the Homocousion were really Hosius of Cordova and Eustathius of Antioch (140). Of these

(139) See Müller's references

(140) See Loofs, P R E (3rd ed.) Pt.II:202-205 for the theory of the late development of the Homocousion in the theology of Athanasius. For the argument that Athanasius did not play a major part at Nicaea but that it was rather Eustathius and Hosius, see Bardy, "Saint Athanase", 18f. and see also references to Theodoret there, and Cavallera, "Saint Athanase" 29-30. But see also the introduction of both Newman and Robertson to the "Depositio Arian" of Alexander, included in each case with the works of Athanasius, and also the annotations in Robertson. Newman presents an exhaustive case involving both literary style and theological terminology.

For Athanasius's estimate, most eminently favourable, of Eustathius of Antioch, see Ad Ep. Aeg. et Lib. 8, Apol. de Fuga 3, Hist Ar. 4. For the more sceptical modern judgment, see Sellers, "Eustathius of Antioch", pp.82-120, and Loofs, "Paulus von Samosata", 293-310. On the other hand, the statement of F. W. Green ("Essays on the Trinity and Incarnation", 257 that "Paul and Marcellus had two powerful friends, Athanasius and the See of Rome" is unusually stupid as it applies to Athanasius, since in his anti-Arian writings Athanasius invariably speaks of Paul of Samosata with an exceptional aversion which rivals that for Arius (see below, pp.366-76. however much it might have applied to Athanasius and Marcellus or even to ~~some~~ <sup>some</sup> ~~Paul~~ <sup>Paul</sup> ~~of Samosata~~ <sup>of Samosata</sup>



two parties, the West was always more sympathetic to Monarchianism than the Origenist East, and the Eustathians in Antioch were more than a little tainted with the Sabellian portion of the theology of the heresiarch Paul of Samosata. On this argument, it was ~~during~~ his exile in Rome and Trier and his meeting with Marcellus of Ancyra that was really responsible for the emphasis in his mature writings on the unity of the Trinity and was the source of any Sabellianizing tendencies in his theology. It might be true technically that Athanasius could not have played a leading part at Nicaea; he could not have, being only a deacon. But it is inconceivable that his superior and Bishop, Alexander, did not play a leading part, even if the suggestion that Athanasius wrote or "ghosted" Alexander's Letter on the Deposition of Arius is mere romanticism. Even more significantly Athanasius would never have been exiled in the first place on this theory unless he had been already, that is before 335, a principal antagonist of the Arians and a principal supporter of Nicaea in the most uncompromising sense. The sort of Athanasius who is postulated by Loofs' theory, for example, would have been one with the very Basil whom the anti-Nicenes forcibly substituted for Marcellus of Ancyra. [Fortunately, we have a better explanation for the Monistic tendencies in Athanasius, that they were derived from the rational side of Athanasius, the natural theology, which is inevitably Logo-monist, which we find in these earliest books. It is perfectly consistent with Athanasius being a passionate supporter of the Nicene faith from the outset, however difficult it is to reconcile with the Origenist type of Trinitarianism traditional at Alexandria; we have already suggested that it represents a genuine division in the theology of in particular Alexandria. But it is also consistent with the fact that the later writings of Athanasius were more and more careful with what later theology described as the hypostatic distinction between



the Father and the Son, Loofs' contention being the reverse of the truth. It is to be noted in this connection that we have here undercut the contention that Rome played an important part in the development of Athanasian theology; it is likely that this rejected hypothesis was exaggerated by Westerners, not only Romanists, for reasons not really connected with disinterested scholarship.

For these reasons, the Deity of the Logos is not so much strongly maintained as treated as the basic implicit assumption. It is probably still fair to say that the supreme attribute of the Logos is still the cosmological and creative relation of supremacy with regard to the world. As we have said, the very importance of the aetiological aspect of the Incarnation and Atonement is a sign of this; it is as if this step, involving the humiliation of the Logos, is so unusual and, in Athanasius's present sense, unnatural that it has to have a great deal of separate explanation. But there is very little fresh material on this point, except for the important ch.44, where Athanasius, in excluding the possibility of the Logos operating to reconcile man by fiat, *νεύματι*, although He created man in this way, implicitly distinguishes the concept of fiat, *νεύμα*, from that of Logos. [Creatio per Verbum in traditional and also in contemporary theology has tended to mean something like this, creation by the commanding, spoken word of God. This is quite correct, but it is evidently not what is meant by *διὰ τοῦ Λόγου*, through the Logos. This suggests that for Athanasius the meaning of Logos was either the cosmological Greek philosophical meaning according to which it is the supreme power of the world, or the Origenist (or Origenist-Philonic) sense of the Logos of God, which is a subordinate emanation from God which resembles the word of man, but is really hypostatistically distinct.] Or it might be a combination of these



meanings.

As far as the terms for the Second Person are concerned, Logos is overwhelmingly the principal term. We shall below summarise the results that we have obtained below from our lexicographical analyses:

LOGOS:	Chapters:				TOTAL
	1-20	21-32	33-40	41-57	
General work independent of the Incarnation	<u>14</u>	. .	. .	<u>9</u>	<u>23</u>
Subject of the Incarnation considered prospectively	4	2	. .	2	8
Subject of the Incarnation considered as an actual deed.	28	. .	8	21	57
Logos as Hypostasis of the Incarnate Christ	<u>20</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>35</u>
	<u>67</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>131</u>

In ch.1 there is one reference to the Deity of the Logos which is too general for any classification, and there is one reference in 33-40 and 6 in 41-57 which refers to the work of the Logos since the Incarnation.

The references to the title Son are too few to be statistically significant in any of the sub-sections, but the total is only 16 in the whole "De Incarnatione", of which five refer to the Son as the Agent of the Incarnation as an Act, nine to the Son as the Hypostasis of the Incarnate Christ, one refers to the post-incarnate work of the Second Person, and one is in the Doxology.

On the other hand, Saviour  $\Sigma\omega\tau\eta\rho$ , and Lord,  $\text{Κύριος}$ , are interesting

and instructive: Saviour:	Chs.1-20	21-32	33-40	41-57	Total
Gen.wk. independent of Incn.	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
Subj. of Incn. prospectively	2	2	. .	. .	4
Subj. of Incn. as actual Act	3	12	2	8	25
Hypostasis of Incn. Christ	1	2	. .	7	10
Synoptic Christ	2	2	3	1	8
Post-Incarnate work	<u>. .</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>. .</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>
	8	20	5	21	54



Lord,	:	Chs. <u>1-20</u>	<u>21-32</u>	<u>33-40</u>	<u>41-57</u>	<u>Total</u>
Gen. wk. ind. of Inc.		*. .	. .	. .	. .	. . *
Subj. Incn. Prospectively		. .	2	. .	. .	2
Subj. Incn. actual Act		2	2	1	6	11
Hypostasis Inct. Cht.		. .	3	. .	2	5
Synoptic Cht.		1	5	3	. .	9
Post-Incarnate Work		. .	. .	1	4	5
		* <u>13</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>42</u> *

There are ten\* instances in chs. 1-20 where the term is used to denote what could be taken as the general creative majesty of the Second Person, but with the difference that the evidence is invariably the deeds of Christ, and also that the term is a functional term standing for Lordship, and not a title in the usual way.

→ The deductions that can be made from this table are that Logos is overwhelmingly the term of choice for the Second Person of the Trinity, and it is the only one that is used in the regular way for the general cosmological activity of the Person in creation (with the exception mentioned in the last sentence of the preceding paragraph). To put it another way, the more cosmological and "Greek" Athanasius's treatment of the Second Person, the greater the predominance of the term Logos, and the exception specified is the exception that manifestly proves the rule. There is very little use of the title Son at all, and when Athanasius wishes to use another title, it is normally Jesus, Christ, Lord or Saviour. This is quite distinct from the later anti-Arian writings, in which Logos and Son are overwhelmingly the principal titles of the Second Person, and the point will be to compare their incidence; all other titles, including Wisdom and Power, are much rarer and normally directly provoked by the context, and will not claim our attention; this is a regular feature, as is evident even on superficial examination,



of all sections of these later works, and it will simplify the task considerably.

It is evident that with such a complete lack of Trinitarian doctrine, the technical terms of later Trinitarianism will have no relation to their later technical use, and the following is a summary (we have here grouped the Christological term φύσις with these, on account of its close relation to οὐσία). ὑπόστασις is completely lacking. Οὐσία occurs only five times: 42:172A (hypothetical diminution of the ο. of mind by the necessity of communication through the tongue as analogical argument against Incarnation). 17:125A (Logos outside the Universe κατ' οὐσίαν as distinct from in the universe τῆς ἑαυτοῦ συνάμεσι). 18:128D (Christ at Cana changed the ο. of water into wine). 18:128D alterum (this miracle shows that He is Λδ and Creator of the ο. of all waters). 20:132A (common essence of the body of Christ with creatures). All these meanings concern essence in the usual Aristotelian sense, but the only one that definitely refers to essence in God is 17:125A, in which the distinction is between what God, or rather the Logos, is or does κατ' οὐσίαν, or by His own powers; the distinction being between what God is eternally in Himself and what He does, non-eternally, in His own temporal acts.

Φύσις is commoner and more interesting. 44:176A (φυσικώτατα, superlative adverb = exactly, Eng. "most naturally". Divine Nature: 54:192A (God invisible τῇ φύσει dat. of respect). 1:97C and 38:161B (each Logos incorporeal τῇ φ.). 28:141C (the body did not die λοθευεῖν, φύσεως of the indwelling Logos). 34:156A (Christ unlike us τῆς φύσεως - gen. of respect.) True (Müller) human nature: 4:104B (transgression turned men εἰς τὸ κατὰ φύσιν). 4:104B alterum ((creatures) φύσιν ἔχοντες τοῦ μὴ εἶναι ἴππε). 5:105A (by participation in the Logos men escaped τὸ κ. φ.). 5:105A alterum (corruption



prevailed more τοῦ κ. φ. - gen. of comparison). 11:113D (the L. seeing the weakness of their nature). 14:121A (neither did they have strength τῇ φύσει to run that far). 21:133B (death comes to men according to the weakness of their nature). 21:133Balterum (L. suffered κατὰ τὴν τῆς φύσεως ἀσθενείαν. 28:144C (man fears death κ. φ. ). 29:145C (men weak τῇ φ. ). 37:160B (as distinct from Christ, prophets, etc. were men κατὰ τὴν τῆς φύσεως ὁμοιότητι). Natural Order: 1:97B (Christ did not bear a body φύσεως ἀκολουθίᾳ ). 5:105B (crimes παρὰ φύσιν = homosexuality as in Rom.1:26 ff.) 51:188A (men were superstitious ὑπὲρ τὴν φ. ) Natural corruption (κατὰ φύσιν φθορά): 3:101C and 4:104C and 5:105A and 7:108D. 49:184C (Aesculapius worked τῇ τῆς φύσεως ἐπιστήμῃ, i.e. by natural scientific knowledge). Nature a genus, or class: 45:177A (of water) 57:196C (as far as it is accessible τῇ ἀνθρώπων φύσει to learn about the Logos of God.) Even a cursory glance is sufficient to reveal the significance of the word φύσις here. At times it denotes "a nature" in the familiar sense, but the prevailing use, by a long way, is κατὰ φύσιν, or the word in an accusative, dative or genitive of respect, again to indicate what aboriginally belongs to the thing in question as distinct from what comes later; on this basis, there cannot be a human nature of Christ. 21:133B alterum, which is a clear Chalcedonian use for the human nature of Christ, is so striking precisely because it is so exceptional. Of course, there are major theological difficulties in Athanasius's use of φύσις here, applied to the sinfulness and corruption of man, which we have already discussed above, but this is probably a difficulty of theological anthropology as a whole.

Since this thesis is primarily on the Trinitarian theology of Athanasius, we cannot treat the soteriological and Christological issues as fully, but we must indicate how his treatment of these issues is



connected with the issues which are our immediate concern; the more so as Athanasius is an abnormally coherent theologian. The Logos doctrine with which Athanasius finally ended was one which emphasised the transcendence of the Logos over the material world, but considered this transcendence in a somewhat rationalistic fashion. This had the virtue, as a matter of fact, of forcing Athanasius to face the issue of why the Logos had to adopt the drastic plan of the Incarnation, and thus to emphasise fully the gravity of the human situation. But in other ways it prevented him from taking the full measure of these issues. Normally we should begin with the Christology, but in this case it is better to handle the issues in the order in which they were raised by Athanasius. In the first place, there is the doctrine of sin. The author of this thesis makes no apology whatever for accepting the schema of Karl Barth (141) as the norm, nor is apology needed. According to this, there are three types of sin; each is in one sense a species of sin, in that acts of sin can be assigned primarily to one group rather than either of the other two, and in another sense they are *summa genera* of sin, in that all three are in some way present in all acts of sin. These are sin as pride, which is Christocentrically the negation of the *kenosis*, sin as damned-foolery (there is no other possible term for it) the Christological negation of the exalted humanity of Christ and sin as unbelief, the negation of the victorious Christ. On this basis Athanasius is mainly interested in the second variety of sin, which is countered by the operation of sanctification, as the first is by justification and the third by the Christian's calling in hope. Sin, for him, is essentially due to a perverse fascination with what is not. In the *Contra Gentes*, this is largely restricted to idolatry, that is, the false ascription of deity to what is not God, and in that sense the

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(141) See sections on sin in Ch. Dogm. Vol. IV: Pts. I, II, III.



worship of a non-existent entity. But in the De Incarnatione, it takes on a wider import, something very close to Das Nichtige, le néant, of Barth and the existentialists. This is the effect of adhering much more closely to the Genesis account. The result of this is not error and idolatry pure and simple, but an obscene and progressive corruption, φθορά, of mankind which if unchecked must lead to his complete annihilation; this corruption pervades the whole nature of humanity. Now there are certain criticisms that are often made which are quite unjustified. To parody Harnack, Athanasius's doctrine of sin is not a toxicology; he gives full expression to sin as a series of human actions in every sense, which are the result of man's transgression, παράβασις, and which he conceives, ἐπινοεῖν, (142) and works out, λογιζέσθαι, with what should be his highest faculty. For the same reason, it is a preposterous perversion of the truth to say that Athanasius thought of a smooth transition through intermediate conditions to complete corruption; what he was saying <sup>was</sup> that even when man had completely fallen he had no escape from the dynamism of sin and its consequences. Perhaps least of all have we the right to cavil at the "physicism" of his position, especially when it is not the sort of physicism that Harnack had in mind. Sin must be recognised as involving the whole of man's physis or nature. And again, Athanasius far more than any of his predecessors and not far short even of Anselm, knows the force of the LAW of sin and death; incidentally, it is God's law of sin and death that has man in its power, and which has prescribed the debt, debitum, τὸ ὀφειλόμενον, that man must pay, a concept used impartially and in exactly the same words both by Athanasius and Anselm.

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(142) See chs. 4-5 and above p. 107 for comment on them.



There is no place whatever for the allegedly "Patristic" notion of a ransom to the Devil; if the question arose to whom the debt is being paid, Athanasius and Anselm would alike have to answer, to God's own Majesty, because, as Athanasius specifically said, by God's very nature, His laws are to be kept and not to be set aside. But a criticism that can be validly made is that even when Athanasius appears to be talking of sin as pride, arrogance, etc., and sin as doubt or unbelief, we find that in fact the other notion is still predominant. Thus, even when man transgresses the bounds that God has set for him, he does not do so after the fashion of Adam and Eve in their desire to be as God, or the builders of the Tower of Babel, or Prometheus and other similar figures of Greek mythology, which we mention for the sole purpose of showing that this idea was quite familiar apart from Scripture. It is rather the pathological fascination with what Barth describes as the things that God has excluded from man for his own good - a most necessary element in any doctrine of sin but not the sole one. Similarly, Athanasius does not give quite the right atmosphere of sin as unbelief. Later, in his scandalously neglected exegesis of the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost <sup>(143)</sup>, he gives the best account of this last in all theology, with the sole exception of Barth's Dogmatics IV:III. He never quite got the measure of sin as pride to the same degree of assurance. This is all the natural result of the old form of Logos doctrine, which always left him with an unresolved tendency to consider sin as a deficiency of the highest level of humanity, and Reconciliation as the supplying of that missing layer. Athanasius transcends this more than is often assumed, but not completely.

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(143) "quicumque dixerit", appended, as chs. 8-23 to "Ad Serapionem IV



There is another way in which this has affected his concept of sin; that, is in that, although he introduces sin as an affront to the majesty of God, he does not carry this idea to completion, as Anselm does, and thus does not give quite the full measure of sin necessary to explain the penal and substitutionary aspect inevitably interwoven with the Cross. For Anselm sin, as an affront to the infinite majesty of God, partook in a sense of the infinity of God Himself, and therefore so did the price which had to be paid - hence only God Himself could pay it. Athanasius was inhibited from this conclusion not only by the relics of the deficiency theory of sin but also, even more important, by the somewhat rationalistic doctrine of the impassibility of the Logos. The best way in which he could state the full gravity and pervasiveness of sin was as an all-pervasive corruption of human nature. In the last analysis this cannot fully account for the drastic measure of the Incarnation, although it is perfectly true of itself and also a perfectly adequate account of why man of himself is completely helpless (144). What is more, Athanasius, in trying to

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(144) In this sense, Böhringer's statement (op.cit. p.100) that "in dieser zweiten Schrift, Könnte man somit sagen, lasse Athanasius der aufsteigenden Linie in der Logosoffenbarung, die den Hauptinhalt der ersten bildete, eine absteigende correspondieren." is quite correct, even though there is also a sense in which Bernard, op.cit. passim, maintains correctly that the fundamental contrast between the Image of God in these two books on the one hand, and the anti-Arian writings on the other, is that in the former the emphasis is on the manward side and in the latter on the Godward side.

Voigt, op.cit. p.116ff. and Sträter, op.cit. p.46, both point out rightly that Athanasius is absolutely anti-Pelagian, except that Voigt makes needless difficulties for himself by, in a somewhat rationalistic way, describing Pelagianism as an abstract separation between the intellectual and ethical sides of man, and quoting only from the later writings (De Decr.1, Ad Serap.I:17, 20, 23, and the "Quicumque dixerit". The effect of this is to prevent him appreciating the criticism that Athanasius's soteriology in the "De Incarnatione" is physical and non-ethical in the pejorative sense, or, better still, appreciating the strength of Athanasius's position. This is what comes of trying to present Athanasius as an orthodox Protestant.



make this a perfectly adequate explanation for the Incarnation, would be ultimately driven to one of two errors; either God's normal creative and sustaining power is essentially incapable of remedying a dysfunction of something that already exists in virtue of its actual existence, which proves far too much, or the Incarnation becomes nothing more than a special case of the general providence and compresence of the Logos in the world in general <sup>(145)</sup>. The former gives too much power both to evil and is a curious inversion of the Demiurge view that the Fathers always so rightly attacked; the latter compromises the uniqueness of the Incarnation, and is particularly dangerous in view of the natural theology that still remains in Athanasius. To the author of this thesis there is no alternative to Anselm to account fully for the Incarnation.

Corresponding to the above, the deficiency in the Revelatory section is the equivocation with regard to natural theology. This has been already discussed in principle. But there is one point that has been mentioned in the text, but which must be repeated here, since it is so often misunderstood. Athanasius denies the possibility of sinful man practising natural theology. It is probably correct to interpret his remarks about natural theology before Christ and beyond Him as purely hypothetical and its practitioners as a null-class. But this is not the real point at issue. The question is, even if a fallen unredeemed man cannot practise natural theology, what about a redeemed man? Does the work of Christ give us this right, in the same way that the knowledge of, say, Boyle's Law in physics gives one the power of understanding more complicated and more accurate gas laws like Van der Waal's Law which transcends the original crude principle - a story repeated constantly in the history of scientific and technical progress? The reason for

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(145) As Athanasius tends to do (in both respects) in chs. 41-44.



the resentment aroused by Karl Barth's attacks on natural theology is really this false but understandable feeling that he has doubted the efficiency of our salvation. Athanasius does not say anything specific along these lines, and it would be anachronistic to expect him to see the difficulty as acutely as our own generation to which ideas of development and progress are so familiar, but this criticism is not entirely unfair, and he has rendered himself suspect. To treat this subject convincingly and exhaustively, it would be necessary to introduce eschatology and the Holy Spirit. We live now in the Spirit, between the Advents, by faith still and not by sight, with our mission to be accomplished in the face of the world and the Last Judgment before evil and death are finally done away. Objective natural theology under these circumstances would inevitably adulterate the Faith with the residual evil of the world; it is either dangerous or, as in the consummated Kingdom, superfluous as a principal method of knowing God. Nor can we Westerners at any rate plead the Holy Spirit as an excuse, since, proceeding from Father and Son, He cannot go beyond the revelation of Christ. Unfortunately, this whole side of theology, including the all-important Filioque, is the weakest point in Athanasius, and so it remained to a large extent throughout his whole life, which is universally agreed to be due to the after-effects of the older form of Logos doctrine.

Turning now to the Christology, we also find signs of the influence of his Logos doctrine. He certainly shows no sign of what Raven wrongly described as "Platonism", that the Incarnation was the result and expression of a natural affinity of the Logos for lesser humanity in its corporeal character <sup>(146)</sup>. This would be probably Stoic in its

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(146) See above p. 105-6.



ontologically incorporeal and impassible, takes or fashions, a body which is to be His instrument, *ὄργανον*, or even His temple (which of course is a Scriptural metaphor). This is a declension from the Johannine *ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο* and falls below the level later reached by the Chalcedonian Christology. It is this body, as a body, which suffered; Athanasius even says at times that the Logos gave the body over to death to fulfil our punishment. This is, as we have already made clear, a very dangerous way of looking at the matter. Of course, Athanasius was saved from the worst dangers of this approach by the very lack of the notion of the *imitatio Christi* in its later highly-developed Western form, and also by the early Patristic idea that our reconciliation is a process of *θεοποίησις*, deification, with its implied half-suggestion that not only the corruption of our humanity but also in some sense our very humanity itself, will be abolished - an idea which later of course fell into disfavour. But in the context of later theology, especially Western theology which was always more at home with ideas of punishment, it is obvious that this way of thinking would be the root of asceticism in its most extreme forms, and it quite likely played its part even in the contemporary Near Eastern developments in this direction. Even more generally, there is a substantially complete correlation between the distinction between Deity and Humanity on the one hand, and that between action and passion respectively on the other, a correlation which is again made, *mutatis mutandis*, in the Revelatory section.

These considerations have induced a school of nineteenth and early twentieth century theologians, including Harnack, Hoss, Stülcken and Raven, to maintain that the Christology and also the soteriology of Athanasius were really proto-Apollinarian in character. To a certain



extent, this is true, insofar as we can blame a man very much for being tainted with a heresy which was not yet topical and had not yet provoked its own formal condemnation. But two qualifications must be made. Firstly, when Athanasius is directly confronted by Scripture he is prepared to speak Scripturally of the sufferings on our behalf of Christ as a whole. In fact, this is the only form of suffering that is worthy of being so called, much more is it the only form with any redemptive significance. It is when he is speaking aetiologically systematically, and intellectually that Athanasius speaks of suffering as being essentially of the body, as opposed to the impassible Logos. The evaluation of this is a matter of taste on which disputation is not to take place, except that we can remark an unresolved tension in Athanasius's thought; incidentally it is remarkable how accurately his way of speaking correlates with whether his immediate subject-matter is directly and narrowly Scriptural or otherwise. From this, it is evident that much of the "Apollinarian" appearance of Athanasius's Christology here is due to the strength of the aetiological element in his thinking. Secondly, it is probable that in his systematic way of speaking Athanasius was trying to represent what the Council of Chalcedon later fixed as the enhypostasia of the Humanity of Christ. It would be prohibitively difficult to discuss this in greater detail here, but one of the things that it does mean is that, although we cannot deny that there is real human activity as well as human passivity in Christ, the very centre of His Person, which originates all His activity, is not human at all, but entirely Divine. The Contra Arianos with their greater emphasis on the active humanity, represent a far closer approximation. But it is true that the De Incarnatione does represent a first crude approximation to Chalcedon, and after all, as its title shows, the book is about the Incarnation as the Act of God.



The fact that Athanasius was virtually beginning ab ovo in circumstances which made previous favoured solutions unacceptable, is shown by the fact that he makes no use whatever of the Origenist solution of the human soul of Christ fused with the Logos. Probably the Psychological analogy, as has been pointed out above, a well-known doctrine which Athanasius himself admitted to be both valid and  
(149) extant, would have inhibited him from following Origen's doctrine  
(150) of the human soul of Christ fused with the Logos. If the relation between the Logos and the world was analogous to that between the higher and lower parts of a man, soul and body, the Origenist position would imply an obliteration of the distinction between Creator and Creature.

When we remember the second qualification and the difficulties in connection therewith that Athanasius would have experienced, the defects of the approach mentioned above become evident. This is especially so in Raven, Apollinarianism (see esp. pp.25-40, 67, 302-308 for the tell-tale signs), where the thesis is adopted in the most extreme form and where the deficiencies are most in evidence. By his whole treatment of the issue, especially his partiality for the heretical Antiochene Theodore of Mopsuestia, Raven shows that what he is really against is not Apollinarianism but the Chalcedonian Christology, and he is attacking it in the interests of Nestorianism, where he is not contending for a Hegelian synthesis between God and man, or an illogical combination of these two heresies. The critic of the Athanasian Christology must dissociate himself from such fellows. Once their mistakes have been corrected, we can make their criticisms with more care and more sympathy.

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(149) C. G. 43. See also De. Inc. 41

(150) C. Cels.III:41; the relation is *ἐνώσει καὶ ἀνακράσει*.



The following tables, for the Christological vocabulary will indicate that the Christology of Athanasius is fundamentally instrumentalist, but that this is due to the tremendous emphasis in the work as a whole on aetiology and on the Incarnation as God's act.

<u>Body</u>	<u>Chs.1-20</u>	<u>21-32</u>	<u>33-40</u>	<u>41-57</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. As subject in all senses	-	-	-	-	-
2. Subject of a verb which stands for a passive state	2	7	-	-	9
3. Grammatically and actually object of external action	5	6	-	-	11
4. Logos subject, humanity object	17	28	4	14	63
5. Logos acts through or by humanity etc	19	2	2	13	36
6. Logos acts (humanity)	-	1	-	-	1
	44	44	6	27	121

There is one instance (chs.1-20 and total) which has three verbs, one of which puts it in Group 1 and two in Group 3.

<u>Man</u>	<u>Chs.1-20</u>	<u>21-32</u>	<u>33-40</u>	<u>41-57</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. As subject in all senses	-	-	-	-	-
2. Subject of a verb which stands for a passive state	-	-	-	-	-
3. Grammatically and actually object of external action	-	-	-	-	-
4. Logos subject humanity object	-	-	-	6	6
5. Logos acts through or by humanity etc	1	-	-	-	1
6. Logos acts (humanity)	7	-	2	1	10
	13	-	4	7	24



Seven cases, five in 1-20 and two in 33-40, have not been classified, since they either say that Christ is "not man", in four cases, or "not merely man" in three.

Little more need be said about the operation of the Atonement which has not been already said, except to summarise. There are two major parts, and a third aspect which emerges in the course of the discussion. The primary aims of the Incarnation were, to pay the otherwise unpayable debt, by the death of Christ, that we had contracted to the Law; and by the direct presence of the Logos to reveal the truth about God and religion and to recreate man in the lost Image of God. During the exposition of these, it is made evident that the Logos has also come to directly repulse the corruption that had man in its grip. In terms of the classical Triplex Munus, these are very good representations of, respectively, the Priestly, the Prophetic, and the Royal Functions, although ideally the middle one should say more about the eschatological aspects of the Revelatory function and our corresponding calling. In terms of the traditional threefold operation of grace, they again correspond very well to, respectively, Justification Vocation (with the above qualification) and Sanctification (which also corresponds to the recreation of man in the Image). It is noteworthy that, contrary to many accounts of Athanasian theology, there is great emphasis on Justification, for reasons that have been outlined above, as well as on legal and cultic-forensic concepts. Here Athanasius goes as far as Anselm except that the ultimate seriousness of sin is not derived from its being an affront to the Infinite God, but from its being an all-pervasive corruption of the whole of humanity which in that way leaves man helpless. Since the infinity of the scandal of sin does not partake in any way of the infinity of God Himself, as it does in a certain sense with Anselm, but is rather derived from a sort



of infinite projection of humanity, this fits in nicely with the tendency to think in terms of the price being not God but the infinitely sanctified humanity of Christ. The Anselmic conception would have been impossible for Athanasius, since it would have contradicted his doctrine of the impassibility of God. The exposition given above in this paragraph does not give quite the full significance of sanctification: this is in one sense the member of the trio that exercises the controlling influence all round; this is shown even in Justification by the importance attached to the idea of the Logos sanctifying the body as a sacrifice is sanctified.

One further aspect of the Atonement which does not come very well into any of the classical theological classifications must be discussed here; Christ's Humanity as the *ἀνακεφαλαιώσις*, summary, recapitulation of ours. This is often erroneously held to be a characteristically Athanasian doctrine. This is not yet true, as far as the *De Incarnatione* is concerned, as distinct from the *Contra Arianos*. The reasons are obvious; the doctrine of the deification of man, and the passive doctrine of the Humanity of Christ. We shall observe how, in the *Contra Arianos*, these are corrected. On the other hand, we find even now this idea re-emerging little by little. This first happens in a form consonant with the passive humanity of Christ, the idea of Christ's Body, given over to death, being so sanctified that it is the summary, and therefore the valid and efficacious equivalent, of the death that we would otherwise have to suffer<sup>(151)</sup>. Then, certain scattered references creep in, as well as the more decisive treatment at a late stage, in the *Refutation of the Greeks*, indicating that Athanasius is beginning to think along the lines<sup>(152)</sup> of the later Fathers, that what Christ did not take He could not redeem.

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(151) See ch.8 ff.

(152) See esp. ch.43.



But none of this is recapitulation in the fullest sense, although it is all an essential part of the concept. The former rather refers to Christ's being the recapitulation of what Christian humanity is to be not; the latter refers to Christ as being like humanity in general at its broadest. The idea of Christ as creating in Himself the New Humanity in which we are to share emerges only on the edge of the theologically most significant first twenty chapters. However, this does begin to come to the fore in the context of the Resurrection and the glorification of Christ, where he treats them as essentially the originals of our own exaltation in Christ <sup>(153)</sup>, in the manner that later became so prominent in the Contra Arianos. But as yet it is nothing like as prominent as it became later; in fact nothing like as prominent as it was in Irenaeus. An incidental point worth noticing is that Athanasius's correlation of the Godhead with action and the Manhood with passion, as in the De Incarnatione, is in a curious way the exact opposite of the procedure of Barth, who methodologically treats the humiliation and suffering together with the Deity and the exaltation together with the Humanity <sup>(154)</sup>. Unfortunately it would again be prohibitive to comment on this, except to note that the Athanasian correlation is the more "natural" one, as Barth feels, perhaps deceptively natural. We have already noted, and shall study at greater length, how the Arian controversy compelled the adoption by Athanasius of the latter half of the Barthian correlation, the exaltation of the humanity, without him ever really arriving at the former half.

The Cross and the Resurrection, as actual facts, are amply enough treated, although the section on these topics has not quite the weight

(153) See esp. end of ch.25 (Long Text)

(154) See Christological sections of Ch.Dog. Vol.IV Pts. I and II and for its justification IV:I:128-135.



of the aetiological sections. One reason is that they are really considered in the former sections, and that in one sense they control them. (The title of the book does not refer so much to the Incarnation as the event liturgically commemorated at Christmas, as to the whole economy of salvation. When it has already been said that the Logos came into the world and took a body so as to pay the mortal punishment due to man, etc.,) and when similar sorts of statement have been made about the Resurrection, little remains, after chapter 20, but to tidy up certain lesser matters. What we can notice is that the Crucifixion and the Resurrection are of approximately equal importance. In one sense it is questionable that so much of the discussion of the Resurrection should concern the effects of it on the lives of men (i.e. only ch.26 is devoted to the Resurrection pure and simple, and 27-32 to the changes in the human situation), but this has the advantage of making it clear that it was the Resurrection that really gave man the power to live the Christian life.

The deficiencies of the De Incarnatione really show when these last sections are studied in detail. We have not quoted in extenso from the relevant chapters, but an examination of the text will indicate quite clearly that Athanasius treated the operation of the grace of the Incarnation in far too immanent a fashion. This is certainly to be correlated primarily with the complete lack of the Holy Spirit in the theology of this book, but the situation may be even more serious. One of the things that is missing, apart from a routine reference at the very end after the main material has been completely presented, is the whole question of the Second Coming. It is not often enough realised by theologians in general that this is primarily a Christological deficiency, if the uniform tradition of the Creeds, to say nothing of Scripture, means anything at all. The Second Coming, which is to come,



is just as much a part of the Second Article of the Creed as the First Coming, and that applies equally to such creeds of Athanasius's youth as the Creed finally agreed at Nicea and the Creed of Caesarea presented by Eusebius at that Council. The natural conclusion from this is that there must have been some inhibition affecting this subject that was over and above a failure in the Doctrine of the Spirit. In the same way, nothing appears to be made of the Ascension of Christ, except in a most general way as the Exaltation of Christ, and the remarks that we have made about the one topic apply to the other. In general, there is nothing particularly to show that this is the time when Christ is away from the earth for a season, and that, in the colloquial phrase, "this is where we come in". The close juxtaposition, in Acts 1 and 2, of the Ascension, the promise of the Second Coming, the command of mission and witness, and the promise and gift of the Holy Spirit, indicate that it is no accident that these things go together, whether in their presence or in their deficiency. It is possible in this connection that Athanasius might have been affected by the general atmosphere of premature euphoria on the end of the long centuries of persecution and the promise of the dawn of a new day under Constantine. It is possible, although there is no evidence whatever either for or against it, that Athanasius shared the view of Eusebius of Caesarea that Constantine himself was an eschatological figure, a harbinger of the end, since the conversion of the ruler of the far-flung Roman Empire would carry the Christian witness to the ends of the earth, thus fulfilling the eschatological requirement. The fact that later, in the *Contra Arianos*, (155) he describes Arianism as the forerunner of Antichrist indicates that there was more eschatological expectation at that time than people



have normally assumed. But the fact is that this was not really integrated into the whole structure of theology, as his treatment shows. It is true that this is a common failing. The great exception is (156) Irenaeus among the early Fathers, and perhaps Karl Barth today (157); but the theology that puts everybody else to shame is not a theology at all but the great modern para-theology - Marxism.

These deficiencies on the question of the Christian's reception of the grace of Christ even extends to cover issues which, to the mind of the average modern Westerner, are purely Christological and do not involve the Spirit directly at all. We refer specially to the complete lack of any mention of either of the two sacraments (or, for the benefit of "Catholics", the two principal sacraments) of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. At first sight, any discussion of the fruits of the Atonement imperatively demands a mention of our baptism into the Death of Christ, and our partaking of His body and blood. But there is nothing. The whole approach of Athanasius is the reverse of sacramentalist. It can be said with some measure of truth, but not with entire truth, that he is essentially Protestant on this issue. Certainly, in chs.46-53, the principal mode of transmission of the grace of Christ, indeed the only way that is mentioned, is the teaching and preaching of the Word, and in fact insofar as these are carried on by ordinary men, they are no more than a participation in the teaching and proclamation of the Logos Himself. Another way of putting the matter is to say that Protestantism, at the Reformation itself and in its contemporary revival (as distinct from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) is a reversion from the Roman Catholic point of view to the objectivism characteristic of the

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(156) Esp. Adv. Haer. Bok. V

(157) Ch. Dog. Vol. IV Pt. III



Greek Fathers and supremely of the De Incarnatione of Athanasius - with the difference that the subjective issues had to be faced this time. It would be quite out of place to say anything more about the theology of the Reformation, most of all on the question of whether its objectivism is adequate, but speaking as a Protestant one must, however, reluctantly, note the omissions in Athanasius's account, and be duly surprised by them.

What is the reason for this? Before we discuss this further, it is necessary to dispose of the Romanist thesis of Cardinal Newman, which was propounded expressly with reference to the Trinitarian doctrine, but which if anything would if in the least defensible, apply even more pointedly here. The thesis is that the matters concerned were esoteric doctrines which could be mentioned, so to speak, in Church, and which theologians were not willing to put on paper. Unfortunately, this is one of the most indefensible hypotheses that has ever been proposed, and it is one concerning which the proverbial remark is literally true, that if you believe this, you believe anything. However much they might have fallen short of Scripture and later doctrine, a whole selection of ante-Nicene theologians, Irenaeus, Justin, Origen, Tertullian (of whom Justin is particularly significant both on account of the wide range of topics and the fact that he was writing in an Apology to the Senate of Rome!), all had enough to say, and publicly, on both the Trinity and the matters that we are discussing now, to disprove Newman's thesis, while the long-standing chaos on the Trinity in the fourth century additionally disproves it in the sphere in which it was propounded. The probable truth was that, in the first place, there was a genuine division in the Church between two types of theology, the intellectual type which was Logocentric with the Logos taking the



sense of rationality, and correspondingly weak on the Holy Spirit; the eschatology, and the ecclesiastical and liturgical and credal type, which was the dialectical antithesis of the other type and did not have its deficiencies, but was relatively undeveloped. The prime interest of Athanasius, at that early time, was in the first type, as befitting a pair of works which, as we now see, were to a degree apologetic and perhaps even academic. Of course Athanasius was far too intelligent and far too faithful to Scripture to stick to one type of theology; the other type came in too, but the Logocentricity and the lack of a doctrine of the Spirit, etc., were almost certainly due to the fact that Athanasius started an intellectual. Besides, what with his doctrine of *Θεοποίησις*, any attempt by Athanasius to ascribe grace essentially to the elements would be an illegitimate divinisation of them, and was in fact repudiated in the *Quicumque Dixerit* ("Ad Serap IV":19).

[ It is probably true that the subjective aspect of Christianity could not develop theologically until there was an adequate doctrine of the Spirit; which, in the earlier days of Athanasius would have been masked by the idea of rationality of the Logos in juxtaposition with rationality as a human and mental quality and activity. It is certainly incorrect to consider the Christocentric sacramentalism (however erroneous in detail) of Trans-substantiation as falsifying this rule; the reverse is the case, since the condition for this doctrine would be not only the doctrine of the Spirit, but the Filioque as well. This is recognised by Greek Orthodox theologians. As to its historical truth, it is no coincidence that it is a Western Roman Catholic dogma defined at the Lateran Council of 1215, and thus, at the rate at which things happened in those days, just after the promulgation of the Filioque in 1014 and the final split of 1054, and contemporaneous with other



changes which, as we shall see later, were unmistakable signs of the  
 (158)  
 Western Procession .

It would be prohibitively difficult to analyse the "De Incarnatione"  
 in relation to his theological predecessors, but a few remarks are  
 (159)  
 necessary here . Christologically, we have already observed the  
 difference between the teaching of Origen concerning the human soul of  
 Christ and the relative lack of development of the corresponding  
 (160)  
 Athanasian teaching . On the other hand, there is, with the  
 (161)  
 exception of Ignatius of Antioch and the well-known Euphusitic  
 formulations of Melito of Sardis in the "Homily on the Pascha", no  
 Christology in this sense which is definite enough to stand comparison  
 in the same way. The reason why Origen had to affirm a humanity of  
 Christ, even a human soul, which was fused with the Logos, but that  
 Athanasius did not commit himself to anything definite beyond the  
 instrumentalist character of the Humanity of Christ, is usually agreed  
 to be that Origen was helped by his doctrine of pre-existent rational  
 natures which had a special status in theology below God but above the  
 (162)  
 rest of creation , whereas no such doctrine is discernible even in  
 the earliest theology of Athanasius, and in the later theology it would  
 (163)  
 have been most offensive . Again, the tremendous strength of

(158) For a full discussion of this, see below, p.1152-1155.

(159) See, for these questions, the original sources of the appropriate Fathers, and also the bibliographies in any modern theological dictionary, and general histories of doctrine, especially of Reconciliation for a ready comparison. Sträter, op.cit. 1-15, on the comparison of Athanasius with Irenaeus and Origen, needs to be taken with a grain of salt, because, as an interested Roman Catholic, he has too great an interest in, and a tendency to, assimilate the three doctrines.

(160) C. Cels. III:41.

(161) Ign. ad Eph. 7.

(162) De Princ. Book I, Ch.5.

(163) For the obvious reason that there had to be a sharp differentiation between God and the creatures.



Athanasius's aetiological interest and also his interest in the Incarnation as the sheer act of God would have inhibited any tendency to discuss in too much detail the Humanity of Christ even in the Origenist way, whereas Origen's interests were far more diffuse, unhurried, and in a sense academic, so that all topics claimed his attention. (164) Dorner made the most balanced summary, when he said that Athanasius's theory "supplied no occasion for more carefully considering the question of the human soul of Christ . . . the man Jesus was simply and solely the Logos, walking among men in the human nature which He bore. Athanasius thus verged towards the old representation of the body of Christ as a garment or a temple which excludes the full idea of the Incarnation. It is remarkable however that precisely here Athanasius made a decided effort to rise beyond that meagre notion . . . (towards the conclusion) . . . that He should become really one of us . . ." (As for the Doctrine of Reconciliation, Athanasius is quite peculiar among the principal theologians of the early centuries in his emphasis on the wrath and judgment of God and on the penal aspect of the Atonement.) On the other hand, the second half of Athanasius's soteriology, the Revelational and enlightening function of the Logos, is the normal and principal position of the earlier Alexandrians, Clement and Origen (165). With Methodius, Athanasius's immediate predecessor, it is a much more difficult matter to determine the connection, if any; "In Methodius we hear much about salvation by faith. And yet his principal writing is an extravagant laudation of virginity. Even the efficacy of Christ's conquest over the Devil is largely the efficacy of His virginity." (166)

(164) "History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ (E.T.) Div.I. Vol.II:259-60.

(165) See Tollinton "Clement of Alexandria" Vol.II: p.21, for a comparison of Clement with Athanasius.

(166) Rashdall "The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology" p.293. See also Methodius, Conviv.10:1.



There is far less resemblance between Athanasius and Irenaeus than is usually assumed. Western theologians of all kinds, especially in the last hundred years, have been far too prone to talk diffusely and inaccurately of the Asia-Minor-type doctrine of physical redemption (167). Undoubtedly, this is a reaction from the prevalent Western theology of both kinds, Protestant and Roman Catholic each in its different way, which has laid too much emphasis on the individual in its ideas of the working of the Atonement in practice, whether it is the individual's own ethical self-consciousness or the individual as on the receiving end of the Church's sacramental and penitential system. If once we recognise, as we should, that these things must be considered generally - that is, (168) from Him in Whom all things consist - and a true confrontation with scientific thought should make the individualistic way of thinking less and less feasible - we should be then in a position to recognise both Athanasius and Irenaeus for what they are really worth, but also to see the great differences between them. There is, of course, a relative lack of the juridical and penal element in Irenaeus, as has been usually recognised, nor is he outstandingly strong on the enlightenment of the soul, as Athanasius is. But he is far stronger than Athanasius, at any rate the Athanasius of the "De Incarnatione", on the Recapitulation, and also, even more so, on the continuity of Christian work and witness and of the growth of mankind unto the stature of the measure of the fulness of Christ (169), and, most of all, on ecclesiology and eschatology. This all compares pointedly with the relatively naïve, almost euphoric treatment of these matters in the concluding portions of "De Incarnatione".

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(167) See Loofs, art. "Arianism" p.18 in P.R.E. (3rd ed.) Pt. II. Stülpken, op.cit. 81-89. Sträter, op.cit. 1-15.

(168) Col. 1:17

(169) Eph. 4:13



Part of this may be due to the different interests of the writers, since Irenaeus did not have the same aetiological interest as Athanasius, but had to write his work to refute the Gnostic heresies, and ultimately and supremely, Marcion. The topics in which he was mainly interested are the natural topics for a theologian with such interests. Indeed, where Irenaeus exaggerates his recapitulations and typologies and fulfillments, it is certainly in the interests of further demonstrating, as against Marcion, the unity of the two Testaments. But the ultimate effect of this is that the doctrines of reconciliation of Athanasius and Irenaeus are, within the general "physicist" basis, virtually dialectical antitheses. Indeed, the "De Incarnatione" shows no very great resemblances to any other earlier writing of a sufficient scale, complexity, and preservation to be comparable. Its closest analogy is not in fact, a patristic book at all <sup>(170)</sup>, but Paul's Epistle to the Romans, or rather, what this Epistle would be if there were no discussion of the Jewish question.

Finally, when one studies an important book like this, it is traditional to evaluate the various criticisms of other writers. On the other hand, in this context this procedure would involve needless repetition, since all criticisms that have ever been made <sup>(171)</sup> of the Doctrine of Reconciliation of Athanasius involve issues that have been

(170) For a comparison of the "Contra Gentes" and "De Incarnatione" together with the "De Theophania" of Eusebius of Caesarea, see above, p.37-39

(171) In addition to the literature cited in the text, see, for example, Rashdall, "The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology", 294-300, Moberly, "Atonement and Personality", 349-365, Denney, "The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation", 36-44 - a severe criticism of Athanasius from the point of view of pietism at its best, and Brunner, "The Mediator"; see also indices under the name "Athanasius" especially for Brunner, whose praise for Athanasius rivals that of Barth cited above.



fully discussed in the text of this chapter or our thesis; its "physicist" and "unethical" character, and, very closely related to it, the apparent vagueness and scrappiness with which Athanasius treats the question of how the Atonement becomes real for the individual. The question of the sense in which Athanasius's concern was with "Redemption" as the basis of his theology is better left till a later stage. But one thing can well be said now, which applies to all these issues. Athanasius's "physicism" is simply a manifestation of his concentration of the thing of ultimate importance, the One Thing on which everything else depends, Christ Himself. Only when that is understood correctly can we go to any other issue, most of all the issue of the individual's appropriation of salvation. Without Athanasius, or rather without the witness to Christ that he gave, there would have been no mystics, no Christian moralists, no pietists in the best sense; they would have all been lost in the ocean of paganism and idolatry. This unswerving concentration on the one thing that really matters was, by the providence of God, the great contribution of the Greek way of thinking to the witness of the Gospel. If it is true that, and if a reason is required why, Christianity survived best in a Greek environment, this is the reason. Dogmatic theology may usurp faith or even Christ Himself, but all too often the real alternative in the situation in question is not these things, but myth and legend, or what is worse, arbitrary and moralistic rules and regulations. When the Greek spirit usurps Christ Himself, it falls further than anything else, but when it is in full submission and conformity to its Lord, it truly keeps before its devotees the First Commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me". It is in this glorious sense that Athanasius is a Greek Christian, the greatest of his kind. The One Thing that counted was Christ, and his "physicism" is



simply a manifestation of this great truth. It is legitimate to criticise him for not having worked out matters in detail that had actually been studied by past generations, but the basis of his theology we reject at our peril <sup>(172)</sup> - most of all in this generation with its background of scientific determinism and unitariness.

This concludes our detailed study of the theology of Athanasius's *De Incarnatione*, unquestionably his developed pre-Arian theology. We have spent much time, more than we anticipated, on this work not only on the grounds of its inherent complexity, in the good sense, but because it is simpler to discuss problems when they appear first. Almost as soon as it was written, the storm of the Arian controversy burst over Athanasius, and he did not return to the more distinctively Christological and soteriological themes until a late stage in the controversy, in the "Contra Arianos". One of the problems that we shall have to face is the differences in the soteriology and Christology and their relation to the intervention of the Arian controversy; at that stage, we shall be able to treat these matters at not such a great length. This brings us to the other reason why we have had to discuss his theology at such great length, the unity of theology, as is shown with particular clarity in Athanasius. It is one of the truisms of theology that when we treat of one subject we are committed to treating every other subject in relation to it, and so in a sense treating everything in connection with every topic. Athanasius's repetitiousness, which is a well-recognised and self-confessed

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(172) The last word may fairly go to Bornhäuser, op.cit. p.94: ". . . (in spite of any deficiencies in Athanasius's theology of the Cross) . . . Dennoch scheint es uns, dass die Theologie unserer Tage (sc.1903 - author) vielfach zu geringschätzig auf den griechischen Vätern herab sieht, und ihnen nicht ihr Recht ungeschmälert zu teil werden lässt . . . (to the impoverishment of all theology) . . ."



characteristic, is due to the fact that he does just this; in this way he pointedly resembles the modern Karl Barth. In any case, now that we have expounded the early theology of Athanasius, with its unreserved commitment to the Deity of the Logos, we must now see how he faced those who denied this first principle.



## CHAPTER II

CRITICAL PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH THE FIRST THREE ORATIONS  
AGAINST THE ARIANS

Before we can go further, we must analyse certain critical problems concerning the Orations against the Arians, for several reasons: First, they are the magnum opus of Athanasius, second, there is no indubitable evidence for their dating, there being prima facie evidence for every date between 338 and 358, third, the former date, championed by Loofs, would make them the earliest of the major dogmatic works, after the De Incarnatione, and finally the dating of these works materially affects the dating of other dogmatic works.

Even the most cursory of preliminary examinations shows that, prima facie The Fourth Oration, whether it is by Athanasius or not, is not the fourth member of a materially consecutive series of four whose first three members are Orations I - III. Therefore seeing that it is obviously not what it claims to be, critical and other questions concerning it will have to be treated separately and it cannot be used for a study of the development of Athanasian theology.

1. Do these constitute a single work, and what is the temporal relation between them?

MSS evidence is unanimous that these works are three separate  $\lambda\omicron\tau\omicron\iota$ . The best translation would be simply "books"; the Latin "orationes" is a great exaggeration; on the other hand, there is a certain rhetorical character about the style which we have already noticed, and which is important to remember in the critical evaluation of them. The commencement of Orat. II:47 and 48, where Athanasius slips into the second person in his references to the Arians, as compared with the commencement of other chapters, notably II:37, 38, 44, indicates a certain affinity to the diatribe. While we are discussing the literary



character it is important to remember that, in view of this, and in view of the even flow of the language and the well-known "repetitiousness" of Athanasius, here at its maximum, we cannot automatically assume that, where a shorter version of an extract from the Orations appears in another work, this other work is later and more mature; Athanasius may have added certain apparently superfluous words to harmonise with the style of the Orations, for the sake of what can only be termed "prose scansion". To return from this lengthy but important digression, the MSS divisions between one ΛΟΓΟΣ and another all agree, and, as the first chapters of each of the three are recapitulatory and/or introductory there is no doubt that they are in one sense three separate books.

On the other hand, they fit tightly together in the way in which a single opus is expected to cohere internally (and occasionally does not!). The architectural pattern is very firmly integrated. Newman in his Notes on Orat.II:18, suggests that Athanasius may be writing a systematic reply to an Arian work. Firstly, the fundamental basis and practice of Arian theology is discussed and refuted (Or.I: till ch.35). From then till the last ten chapters of Or.III, Athanasius expounds, in terms of the orthodox doctrine, the passages of Scripture on which the Arians relied for their case, and in an order that is not haphazard, but quite deliberate. He begins with the verses where the question at issue is simply the use of ΠΟΙΕΙΝ, to make, or similar word applied to Christ as the direct object, or other expression implying that Christ is a mere creature, according to the Arians; here Athanasius for the first time fixes the distinction between Christ as man and Christ as God. This culminates in the famous passage Prov.8:22, LXX; in a most extended exposition of this passage, Athanasius makes one of the two great expositions in theological history of Predestination, as being God's predestination of Himself



in Christ, and in the Economy of Salvation, as the God of Grace. The preceding exegesis clears the ground for this. Finally come the passages concerned with the Incarnate Christ Himself, in which the working out in detail of the economy of salvation is expounded. The last ten chapters of Or.III begin a new section dealing with the various evasive actions of the Arian party, and the tricks by which they tried to insinuate Arianism into the Church, once it had found open Arianism repulsive. This section is patently incomplete; this will be discussed later, and nothing can be said now, except that, whatever was meant to follow Or.III, ch.67, it was not Or.IV. The structural unity of the exegetical sections is confirmed by the fact that in Or.I.53 and III:1, brief summaries of the passages mis-expounded by the Arians include, in each case, passages whose orthodox exposition is contained in each of the Orations I, II and III.<sup>(1)</sup>

For this reason, we cannot accept the commencement of Orat.II and III, in which (explicitly in II, less so in III) Athanasius expresses his disappointment in being compelled to produce new material because his previous books had not convinced them as evidence that his intentions were ever restricted to Orat.I or Orat.I and III.<sup>(2)</sup> This is more likely to be a half-polite, half-ironic apology for an unusually large quantity of material, of the sort that is consistent with Greek

(1) See StHleken, "Athanasiae", Texte und Untersuchungen, 1899, Neue Folge IV, Heft II. This important work will be cited throughout this chapter as "op.cit".

(2) The suggestion here rejected was made by Montfaucon, Migne P.G. XXV, cxxxviii B left col.; Robertson, L.N.P.-N.F. p.303, tentatively accepts the beginning of Orat.II: 1 as evidence that the orations were composed at different times.



literary manners; it may also be, in part, something like the hope of any self-respecting general that the complex plan that he has just devised will be made unnecessary by the enemy's surrender at the first blow. Of course, it may be still true that, as we shall see later, the exegetical section is much longer than what was originally envisaged. Incidentally, Athanasius further alludes to the Arians' imperviousness in the middle of the Second Oration.<sup>(3)</sup> Thus in general it is evident that from the outset the intentions of Athanasius extended to Orat.III:67, at least. On the other hand, the general presumption, justified by the traditional division, would be that they were issued at different times, though probably in rapid succession, without a real break. As a matter of fact, we cannot be absolutely sure that there was not a quite substantial break in time between one and the other, during which Athanasius might even have composed other works. There is the famous case of Wagner's "Der Ring des Nibelungen", in which, having written all four poems and the music of "Das Rheingold", "Die Walküre", and about half of "Siegfried", in 1857, <sup>he</sup> laid aside the music for 12 years, during which he began and completed two unrelated music dramas in which he developed tremendously, and resumed, in 1869, the music of the remainder of "Siegfried" and of "Die Götterdämmerung", in such a way that such a sensitive critic as Ernest Newman states that the break cannot be detected. Although there can be few cases of a writer or artist having a sufficient intellectual and moral grasp of his subject, the "Contra Arianos" is

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(3) II:19:1940 ff. M. Stöcklen, op.cit. p.45, also quotes I:29:72A in this connection, but the relevance is relatively tenuous.



certainly one such. Of course, this alternative hypothesis would give the Contra Arianos even more of the character of a magnum, or rather maximum, opus than even<sup>4</sup>. In general, it is more probable that the three Orationes were issued consecutively, but it means that in establishing the date of writing, we shall have to be careful to consider evidence from the various sections of the three Orationes.

Thus, although the Orationes I - III were probably published separately, they are in the strongest sense a unity; they were probably though not certainly issued in succession.

## 2. The Date of Composition of the Contra Arianos I - III.

In spite of the traditional opinion that they date from the Third Exile, c. 358, the most cogent discussion is that of Stülcken<sup>(4)</sup> and Loofs<sup>(5)</sup> who maintain that they were written at a much earlier date, Loofs supporting 358. Therefore, our study will be, in the main, an exposition and criticism of the views of these scholars<sup>(6)</sup>.

The dating of 358<sup>(7)</sup> is traditionally based on the position of

(4) op.cit., pp. 45-50.

(5) In P R E (3rd ed.) Pt. II: p. 200. See also pp. 17-19 of same part.

(6) This sort of view is also supported by Gummerus, "Die homöusianische Partei bis zum Tode des Konstantius, 185-196, and also, tentatively, by Opitz, notes on "de Decretis" 5, apud fin..

(7) Originally the Benedictine dating; of Migne P.G. XXV: cxxxvii - cxxxviii, and XXVI: 9-10 etc. This is followed by virtually all Roman Catholic and Anglican scholarship, up to and including, in the latter case, Kelly, "Early Christian Creed", 257-261. Most German Protestants have tended to support the earlier dating, except Hoss, "Studien . . ." 51. The only Roman Catholic which the author knows to have disagreed with the traditional dating is Cavallera, "Saint Athanasius", p. 20, where he suggests 347-350, which would agree with Loofs and Stülcken in putting them before the "De Decretis". The author has in virtually every respect found himself in remarkably complete agreement with Anton Stegmann "Zur Datierung der drei ersten Reden des heiligen Athanasius gegen den Arianern", Theologische Quartalschrift (Tübingen), 1914: 423-450; he is the most independent of the Roman Catholics.



the Orations in several MSS immediately after the Ep. Enoycl. ad Episc. Aeg. et Lib., and a postulated identification of them with the work referred to in Ep. ad Serap. de Morte Arian 1 (Migne P.G. XXV 685A), Ep. ad Monachos 1 (XXV 692A) and passim, Ep. I ad Serap. de S.s. 2 (XXVI 532B), Ep. II ad Serap. de S.s. 1 (608C-609A); see also Ep. III ad Serap. de S.s. 1 (624C-625A).<sup>(8)</sup> On the former issue the evidence in favour of this view is that in Codex Seguer the Ep. Enoycl. ad Episc. Aeg. et Lib. is styled the First Logos against the Arians, on the authority according to a marginal note, of Theodore of Pharan, an orthodox critic of the contention of Severus the Monophysite in his claim that it was really the Fourth Oration. In many other cases this Epistle figures as the Fourth Oration, in others as the Third,<sup>(9)</sup> with the De Sententia Dionysii, divided in two as the first two.

(8) Cf. for what follows, Stülcken, op. cit. pp. 51-2, Newman, Select Treatises against the Arians, p. 499, in "Library of the Fathers", Oxford, Migne, P.G. XXVI; 9-10. Also the modern study of the MSS, evidence in Opitz, "Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung der Schriften des Athanasius", ch. 1.

(9) The position in the MSS used by Opitz is as follows:

W Collection:

T (Codex Patmianus A 4 membr. s. X): 1. C.G. 2. De Inc. 3. Ps-Ath. Disputatio cum Ario (Migne P.G. XXVIII: 440 f.) 4. Ep. ad Episc. Aeg. et Lib. (described as 1st Oration against the Arians. 5. Orat. I C.Ar. (here described as 2nd). 6. Orat. II C.Ar. (here described as 3rd).

X (Cx. Genuensis): 1. (end of De Inc.) 2. Disp. cum Ario. 3. Ep. Ad Episc. Aeg. et Lib.

U (Cx. Patmianus A 3 membr.): 8. Disp. cum Ario. 9. Ep. ad Ep. Aeg. et Lib. ("Orat. 1"). 10. C.Ar. I ("2"). 11. C.Ar. II ("3"). 12. C.Ar. III ("4").

N (Cx. Marcianus graecus 50): 12. De Inc. et C.Ar. 21. Disp. cum Ario. 22. Ep. ad Ep. Aeg. et Lib. ("Orat. 1"). 23. C.Ar. I ("2"). 24. C.Ar. II ("3"). 25. C.Ar. III ("4").

W (Cx. Athous Vatopedi, 7 membr.): 16. Disp. cum Ario. 17. Ep. ad Ep. Aeg. et Lib. 18. C.Ar. I ("1"). 19. C.Ar. II ("2"). 20. C.Ar. III ("3"). 21. De Inc. et C.Ar.



Now it is quite certain, from the mention of the historical events

M (Cx. Marcianus graecus 49): 3. Disp. cum Ario. 4. Ep. ad Ep. Aeg. et Lib. 5. C. Ar. I ("1"). 6. C. Ar. II ("2"). 7. C. Ar. III ("3"). 8. De Inc. et C. Ar.

L (Cx. Burnesianus 46): 3. Disp. cum Ario. 4. Ep. ad Ep. Aeg. et Lib. 5. C. Ar. I ("1"). 6. C. Ar. II ("2"). 7. C. Ar. III ("3"). 8. De Inc. et C. Ar.

Q (Cx. Riccardianus): 3. Disp. cum Ario. 4. Ep. ad Ep. Aeg. et Lib. ("Orat. 1"). 5. C. Ar. I ("2"). 6. C. Ar. II ("3"). 7. C. Ar. III ("4"). 8. De Inc. et C. Ar.

#### DOXOPATER Collection:

B (Codex Basilienus) (A III 4 chart p. XIII): 3. Disp. cum Ario. 4. Ep. ad Ep. Aeg. et Lib. 5. C. Ar. I ("1"). 6. C. Ar. II ("2"). 7. C. Ar. III ("3"). 8. De Inc. et C. Ar. 22. C. Ar. IV ("5").

K (Cx. Athous Vatapedi V & VI memb.): 3. Ep. ad Ep. Aeg. et Lib. 4. C. Ar. I ("1"). 5. C. Ar. II ("2"). 6. C. Ar. III ("3"). 7. De Inc. et C. Ar. 30. C. Ar. IV (Unnumbered: τοῦ αὐτοῦ κατὰ Ἀπειρανῶν).

A (Cx. Ambrosianus 464): 3. Ep. ad Ep. Aeg. et Lib. 4. C. Ar. I ("1"). 5. C. Ar. II ("2"). 6. C. Ar. III ("3"). 7. De Inc. et C. Ar. 30. C. Ar. IV ("5").

Y (Cx. Mosquensis 115): See A above but no C. Ar. IV.

F (Cx. Florentinus graecus (San Marco): 3. Disp. cum Ario. 4. Ep. ad Ep. Aeg. et Lib. 5. C. Ar. I ("1"). 6. C. Ar. II ("2"). 7. C. Ar. III ("3"). 8. De Inc. et C. Ar. 31. C. Ar. IV ("5").

d (Cx. Vaticanus graecus): 1. Disp. cum Ario. 2. C. Ar. III.

Group  $\Phi$ : The only relevant member is g (Cx. Mediolanus): 10. Disp. cum Ario. 11. C. Ar. III ("3").

#### 2 S Collection:

R (Cx. Parisinus graecus 474, called Regius by Montfaucon): (The first 20 writings are missing, as the first Greek number is κα). 21. C. Ar. III (unnumbered). 22. C. Ar. IV (τοῦ αὐτοῦ . . .).

S (Cx. Parisinus Coislinianus graecus 45, called Seguerianus by Montfaucon): 4. De Inc. et C. Ar. 18. Ep. ad Ep. Aeg. et Lib. ("Orat. I"). 19. C. Ar. I ("2"). 20. C. Ar. II ("3"). 21. C. Ar. III ("4"). 22. C. Ar. IV ("5").

E (Cx. Scorialensis ω): 8. Ep. ad Ep. Aeg. et Lib. ("Orat. I"). 9. C. Ar. IV ("5").

P (Cx. Parmensis graecus 10): 1. C. Ar. III ("4"). 2. C. Ar. IV ("5").

O (Cx. Scorialensis X): 10. Ep. ad Ep. Aeg. et Lib. ("Orat. I"). 11. C. Ar. I ("2"). 12. C. Ar. II ("3"). 13. C. Ar. IV ("5").



of 356, including the nomination of George as bishop, that the

Ungrouped MSS:

C (Cx.Atheniensis): 1. C.Ar.I("1"). 2. C.Ar.II("2"). 3. C.Ar.III("3"). 4. Ep.ad Ep.Aeg.et Lib.("Orat.4").

G (Cx.Laurentianus 4. 23 memb.): 16. De Inc.et C.Ar.

Z (Cx.Vaticanus graecus 1431): 8. De Inc.et C.Ar.

D (Cx.Ambrosianus 235): 21. De Inc.et C.Ar.

V (Cx.Vaticanus graecus 400): 1. C.Ar.IV (τοῦ αὐτοῦ λόγος κατὰ Ἀρειανῶν λίαν σφοδρός). 2. Disp.cum Ario.

b (Cx.Genevensis graecus 29): (second scribe): 1. Ep.ad Ep.Aeg. et Lib. ("Orat.I"). 2. C.Ar.I("2"). 3. C.Ar.II("3"). 4. C.Ar.III("4"). 5. De Inc.et C.Ar.("Orat.5"). 6. Ep. Enycl.("Orat.6").

Only the portions of the order of the books directly relevant to the "Contra Arianos" I-III has been given here. Where all three Orations are present, the order is always the same, and Opitz notices no difference in the position of the divisions between the Orations, except in the case of the first and the last MSS in this list, where folia have been lost or placed out of order. The table certainly shows the close association of the Orations with the Ep.ad Ep.Aeg. et Lib., and to a less extent, with the De Inc.et C.Ar., in each case much closer than with the so-called Fourth Oration. But on the other hand, reference to the full table - as is evident even from the selection here - indicates that there is almost no correlation at all between the place in the MSS and the time of writing, except that the "C.Gentes" and "De Incarnatione" are normally first. This lack of correlation is evident whatever dating is adopted for the Orations, and in spite of the MSS evidence, we are still in a position to discount these connections on other grounds. The general tendency to put the Orations early thus probably means no more than that the collectors arranged the works frequently on the basis of the most important or characteristic works coming first, after the indubitably earliest works. It is significant that the other anti-Arian writings are quite irregular in their placement.



Ep. Encycl. ad Episc. Aeg. et Lib. was written at or just after that date, and the claim is that therefore, by reason of their close association either just before or just after, the Orations I-III should be deemed to have been written about the same time. However, it is at least as certain that this Epistle is, again not a member, in any place whatever, of any series which includes Orations I-III, for these two reasons: firstly, it is a mixture of history and pure dogmatics, while the Orations are as close an approach to pure dogmatics as we find in Athanasius, at any rate in the anti-Arian writings, the historical material being kept down to a bare minimum; secondly, the dogmatic and exegetical sections of the Ep. Encycl. ad Episc. Aeg. et Lib. chs. 13-17, include material from all three Orations. Thus the presumption is that the Epistle is not part of the same work as the Orations, since otherwise the tightly organised plan of the latter would be disrupted. Montfaucon admits this, although he does accept the abovementioned MSS order as representing an approximate chronological order of writing.

To turn to the cross-references in other works of the Third Exile enumerated above, we shall follow in the main Stülcken's refutation of the traditional position. The important references are in the Ep. ad Monachos, as follows, starting at the beginning: (the missive mentioned forms virtually the entire subject of the letter):

1. "In compliance with your affectionate request, I have written a short account (ἔγραψα δι' ὀλίγων) of the sufferings which ourselves and the Church have undergone, refuting, according to my ability, the accursed heresy of the Arian madmen, and proving how entirely it is alien to the truth. . . . (after a statement of the extreme difficulty he had in writing about



2. the subject, due to its own inherent majesty). . . . But lest I should be found to disappoint you or by my silence to lead into impiety those who have made inquiry of you, and are given to disputation, I constrained myself to write briefly (ὀλίγα γράψαι) (XIV 693A), which I have now sent to your Piety. . . . (there follows a statement that although we are reduced to negative theology, that is enough to refute and denounce Arianism) . . . .
3. Accordingly I have written as well as I was able; and you, dearly beloved, receive these communications not as containing a perfect exposition of the Godhead of the Word, but as being merely a refutation of the impiety of the enemies of Christ, and as containing and affording to those who desire it suggestions for arriving at a pious and sound faith in Christ. . . . And immediately send it back to me, and suffer no-one whatever to take a copy of it, nor transcribe it for yourselves. . . . For it is not safe that the writings of us babblers and private persons should fall into the hands of them who shall come after. . . . (follows conclusion and doxology).

Much of this is simple Greek and Christian modesty, and it is by no means out of the question that the same may apply to the two references to the shortness of the treatise mentioned; in a sense, and in the sense referred to here, even the Orations I-III would be short compared with their subject, in all its majesty.

The Ep. ad Serap. de Morte Arian patently refers to the same book or books: (starting from the beginning)

". . . (salutation) . . . you have requested me to make known to you the events of my times relating to myself, and also concerning that most impious heresy of the Arians, . . ., and also of the manner of the death of Arius. With two out of your



three demands I have readily undertaken to comply, and have sent to your Piety what I wrote to the monks; from which you will be able to learn τὰ τε καθ' ἡμᾶς καὶ τὰ κατὰ τὴν ἀίρεσιν (Lat. cum res nostras, tum eas quas ad haeresim attinent. In spite of

L.N.P-N.F., not necessarily "the history of the heresy"). . . .

(There follows a description of the death of Arius, to settle the point that, assertions to the contrary notwithstanding, he died suddenly and spectacularly before his restoration to communion with the Church, just as he was about to be restored, to clinch the argument) . . . . (Finally the admonition addressed to the monks against publication is repeated and for the same reason ) . . . ."

From these two references combined deductions can be made. In the first place, it is obvious that no one work at present extant meets the case, with the possible exception of the Ep.ad Episc.Aeg. & Lib., and the "De Synodis". However, the "Contra Arianos I-III", in combination with the so-called "Hist. Arianorum ad Monachos", traditionally associated with the Ep.ad Monachos, will fill the bill, although the combination would be exceedingly long, as both the historical and dogmatic elements would be present as required. The former reference suggests that it was one work, but the latter definitely shows that there were two, which leaves the above hypothesis as a possibility, that the Orations were at least part of what was written to the monks. But the evidence is not at all strong.

Secondly, these letters, which are evidently very close together, were written during the Third Exile. Since the latter was written to enable Serapion to give an authoritative refutation of rumours that Arius had died in full communion, Serapion was evidently a bishop, and although we do not know a great deal about his career the earliest time consistent with the above and also with the extreme sufferings of



Athanasius which he mentions (if they do refer to a specific present or recent state of affairs), is the Third Exile. Even here, the evidence is not conclusive, and the combination of factors, although a point in favour of the traditional dating, is far from conclusive.

The reference in the Epistolae ad Serap. de S.s. have been cited, but do not really help. The Epistles were written during the Third Exile (Ep.I, first sentence). In ch.2 of Ep.I, Athanasius, in a brief reference to the Arians as being like the Tropici, says of the former, "τὰ πρὸς τοὺς τῶν εἰρημένων against them is sufficient". (P.G.XXVI 532B). As Shapland says in his footnote, this may refer, not only to the Contra Arianos, but also to the whole corpus of anti-Arian writings, and in any case there is no clue as to whether the writings in question are recent or not. The passage at the very opening of Ep.II is as follows:

"I was of the opinion that even as it was, I have written briefly  
 ὀλίγα γεγραμένα - that is, as this extract undoubtedly refers to Ep.I ad Serap. de S.s., 80 cols. of Latin and Greek combined in Migne's Patrologia Graeca, as against 457 for Cont.Ar. I-III); indeed, I taxed myself with great weakness in not being able to put into writing all that it was humanly possible to say against those who are guilty of impiety toward the Holy Spirit. But since, as you write, some of the brethren have actually asked that it be abridged, . . . . I am composing this as well . . . .".  
 And again, at the very beginning of Ep.III.1:

"Perhaps you will wonder why, when I was charged to abridge and briefly to explain the letter I had written concerning the Holy Spirit (unquestionably Ep.I ad Serap.), you find me, as though I had laid aside my work on that subject, writing against those



~~who are guilty of impiety toward the Holy Spirit. But since, as you write, some of the brethren have actually asked that it be abridged, . . . I am composing this as well, . . .~~

~~And again at the very beginning of Ep.III,1:~~

~~"Perhaps you will wonder why, when I was charged to abridge and briefly to explain the letter I had written concerning the Holy Spirit (unquestionably Ep.I ad Serap.), you find me, as though I had laid aside my work on that subject, writing against those who are guilty of impiety toward the Son of God and who call him a creature . . . ." (also refers unmistakably to the contents of Ep.II).~~

This confirms that the letter which the brethren, presumably the monks, wanted abridged, was Ep.I ad Serap.de S.s., and the corollary of Stüloken<sup>(10)</sup> that, a fortiori, Athanasius would not have replied to the request by writing the much longer Contra Arianos I-III, is plausible. But there is an alternative explanation that the monks desired an abridgment of both the Contra Arianos I-III and Ep.I ad Serap. de S.s. combined; although it has little support from the text it would be an explanation of the purely anti-Arian character of Epistle II. In conclusion, although the evidence is strongly against any direct reference to Contra Arianos I - III, at any rate as having recently been written, in the Epistolae ad Serap de S.s., the evidence is again not conclusive. Thus the case for the traditional arguments for dating the Cont. Arianos I-III in c.358 is at least doubtful.

<sup>(11)</sup> Robertson accepts the postulate of a late date without approving of the traditional grounds; he makes the rather less

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(10) Op. cit. p.46

(11) L.N.P-N.F. p.303



definite case that the absence of almost all reference to the is a sign that Athanasius was attempting to conciliate the conservative Homoeans, and that it was only about 357 that the theological issue was clearly formulated for the first time, the quarrel up till now being conducted on personal and historical lines. The latter is a remarkably arbitrary statement; can a basically non-theological stage of the Arian controversy be even imagined? The former is an important point which will be examined fully at a later stage, with conclusion unfavourable to the hypothesis in question.

Having disposed, then, of the traditional arguments in favour of the Benedictine dating, we must now consider those in favour of an early date, beginning with those of Loofs<sup>(12)</sup> some of which are accepted and others not, by Stülcken<sup>(13)</sup>.

1. They were written after the death of Arius, that is, the terminus a quo is 335. That Arius is dead is stated categorically in C.Ar.I:3:17B.

2. They were written in the reign of Constantius (337-361) (I: 10: P.G.XXVI 52C and III:28:384A); in the two references cited, Constantius is mentioned quite naturally as the civil power with whom the Arians have to deal. We cannot differentiate, it must be added, between his sole emperorship and other times, as at all times he was supreme over Athanasius's home and see, as well as the districts in the East where Arianism was strongest; so we cannot say that the Orations were written after he became sole Emperor in 351. But we cannot ~~either~~ accept <sup>either</sup> the statement of Shapland<sup>(14)</sup> that these two

(12) Loc. cit.

(13) Op. cit. 45-50

(14) Footnote on p.19 of his edition of "Letters to Serapion on the Holy Spirit".



references indicate a date after 356, either for the composition or for any re editing in their present form. They are quite neutral in character, altogether different from the bitter language of the Hist. Arian. passim. esp. chs. 68-77 passim, which, if anything, suggests that the Orations were written before the irreversible catastrophe of 356-7 and not after. The references are: (I:10:32B-C) "Wherefore . . . they hide it (so. their light) under the bushel of their hypocrisy, and make a different profession, and boast of patronage of friends and authority of Constantius, that what with their hypocrisy and their professions, those who come to them may be kept from seeing how foul their heresy is."

And again: (III:28:384A) "or if they fear to judaize openly and be circumcised, from servility towards Constantius and for their sake whom they have beguiled (these last two clauses are a very bad translation; *διὰ τὴν πρὸς Κωνσταντίου ἀρεσκείαν καὶ τοὺς ἀπατηθέντας παρ' αὐτῶν* Lat: tum ut Constantio non displiceant, tum illorum gratia quos deceperunt. There is no question of "gratia"; the point is that the Arians are in fact servile towards the rest too, because they are trapped in the position of having to continue the deception), then let them not say what the Jews say." Constantius does not appear in the least as an open persecutor, but rather as a man who accepts, or appears to accept, orthodoxy. The Arian claim of Imperial patronage is not a plain statement of fact or a realistic corollary to Constantius's own position; it is hypocritical and mendacious, and is for the purpose of disguising their own character. Constantius has his heart in the right place, along with their other allies of the same party; there would be grave consequences on the Arians if he found out the inner truth about them, that they were virtually Jews. The atmosphere is admittedly consistent with that of the



Apologia ad Constantium, written early 357, when Athanasius still had some hope from that quarter though he was even now in exile. But it is important evidence against the sort of association between the Contra Arianos I-III and the Hist Arianoru that has been hypothetically mentioned above. This at once brings the terminus ad quem down to the very beginning of the Third Exile, making the traditional exile dating relatively improbable (it is to be noted that the two passages in question are concordant and near the beginning and end of the Orations). Also, although this is not quite so certain, it makes dates before Athanasius's restoration (with the consent of Constantius) in 346 much less likely, as Constantius was in the thick of the persecutions of the previous nine years<sup>(15)</sup>.

3. The protection of the Arians by the temporal power had just begun, that is, the date would be the late thirties. Loofs quotes Or.II: 43: 240A; "Then, whereas their doctrine is nauseous to all men, forthwith, as a support against its fall, they prop (σπονθεύουσι) it up by human patronage, that the simple, at the sight or even the fear of it, may overlook the mischief of their perversity." As the tense of the important verb is present, there is no clue to whether the patronage has only just begun or not, or even how it worked in practice; the point that is being made is that their prosperity is utterly dependent on such expedients instead of on the inherent truth of their doctrine and life. This of itself gives no further indication<sup>(16)</sup> whatever of the date of composition, as Stülpken admits

4. The fourth criterion of Loofs is that the time is one when Athanasius had no experience of present or past persecutions. He

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(15) The conclusions in this paragraph of course are the author's own not Stülpken's.

(16) Op. cit. p.46



does not comment on this, but the argument is evidently that there is no mention of such events in the Orations. Stülcken does not accept this argument, rightly maintaining that the "Contra Arianos" is an essentially non-historical work as we have already seen <sup>(17)</sup>.

5. That Asterius the Sophist was still alive (I:30,32, II:28, 37,40, III:2,60). Stülcken fully accepts this argument and elaborates it at greater length <sup>(18)</sup>. This issue will also be discussed in full below.

6. The standard representatives of the Arian movement are Arius himself, Eusebius, presumably of Nicomedia (since no writings are mentioned in connection with him) and Asterius the Sophist. The standard Arian literature is the *Thalis* of Arius and the Syntagmation of Asterius <sup>rather than</sup> and other writings. This is accepted by Stülcken, and will be discussed below at greater length <sup>(19)</sup>.

7. The Orations were written at a time when Athanasius did not think of himself as the standard-bearer of orthodoxy. Two passages are cited, II:15:177B, "This, *κατὰ γὰρ τὴν ἐμὴν οὐθύνειαν* , is the meaning of this passage . . . .", and II:72:301A ". . . . (the above will afford material) *τοῖς λοχωτέροις* to frame more ample refutations of the Arian heresy . . . .". Stülcken points out that analogous expressions occur in works of Athanasius unquestionably written in 358 or later (Ep.ad Serap.de Morte Arian 5:689C, Ep.ad Monachos <sup>(20)</sup> passim, Ep.ad, Epist.12:1069B) ; he might well have added that it was impossible at any time for Athanasius to make

(17) Op.cit. p.46

(18) Op.cit. pp.46-7

(19) Op.cit. pp.46-7

(20) Op.cit. 47.

any such claim as Loofs expects since it would have duplicated the arrogant statements of Arius at the beginning of the Thalia, which Athanasius quotes and castigates with unmeasured contempt in Oration I:5:20C-21A, and which, since the Gnostics, had been regarded as pathognomonic of heresy. It is quite un-Christian, anyway.

8. The Orations were written at a time when the origin of the heresy in the time of Bishop Alexander of Alexandria was still dominant in the memory of men. The extracts quoted in support of this hypothesis are: I:22:57C, a reference to the propaganda of Arius himself and his entourage among the proletariat in the early days of Arianism, and II:19:185B-C, the celebrated answer to Alexander that the Word was "a creature, but not as one of the creatures", etc. Apart from the fact that the context in each case indicates that the emphasis is on the theological points raised, and that these are such as to justify attention at any time, the mention of events at the very onset of the heresy, even at a relatively late stage, would be just as natural as a modern man referring to the activities of Marx and Engels in a discussion of Communism. In supporting Loofs on this issue, Stüloken<sup>(21)</sup> also cites C.Ar.I:1:15B: ἐπλάνησέ γε τῶν ἀφρόνων ἤδη πινάρι as the final corroboration of the early dating of the Orations. But this is not relevant either, since the context of this citation is the possibility that Arianism will be the precursor of Antichrist.

Stüloken rejects most of these grounds, but admits those that involve historical or personal references, and adds others, comparing

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(21) Op.cit 47



as between the "Contra Arianos" and other anti-Arian works, the last ten chapters of C.Ar.III (i.e. with the opposed Arianizing Creeds in "De Synodis"), the exegesis of Prov.8:22 LXX, and the treatment of the *ἄνθρωπος*. Incidentally, Loofs admits the genuineness of C.Ar.IV, dates it at 338, and uses this as further evidence for his early dating of the first three Orations; Stülcken<sup>(22)</sup> rejects the Fourth Oration, rightly, in the author's opinion but this does not affect his conclusions.

At this stage, we must examine the relation of the Contra Arianos I-III to historical personalities and facts, analysing all the historical <sup>references</sup> ones, with selected relevant ones from other works as a comparison. The number of historical and personal references is very small; some have been discussed already; the balance are: I:3:17B;

"Thus, though Arius be dead and many of his party have succeeded

him, yet those that think with him . . . . are called Arians."

This is embedded in a chapter which is a general discussion of the scientific law, as Athanasius sees it, that all heretics are named eponymously after their earthly founders instead of by the name of Christ. The following chapter (4), is a description of the scandal of Arius's Thalia and his public dancing. In ch.5-6, the Thalia is examined in detail. During these chapters, verbs of saying, with Arius as the expressed or understood nominative, are frequent; they are: (5:21A) the mockeries *κροτούμεν* by him *ἔστιν*. (ibid) *φησὶ* as again in B-bis and C. (6:21D) *εἰπέιν* . . . *ἐτόλμησεν*. (24A) *ἔθηκεν ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ*. (24B) *φησὶ*. Note the number of present tenses although Arius is dead. In 7:25B, it is stated that these

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(22) Op.cit 50f

pronouncements were the grounds for his excommunication at Nicaea.

(I:22:57B) "Ranking Him among these (i.e. Christ among the creatures)

. . . οἱ περὶ Ἀρείου ἐκ διδασκαλίας Εὐσεβίου revolted (ἀπεπήδησαν)  
from the truth, and, having (aor. part.) concocted deceitful phrases,  
περιήρχοντο κατὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν (then follows a description of their

activities among the proletariat in the market, etc., in the present  
tense). I:30-34 is a study of the concept ἀχένητον, which will be

discussed in full later. Here, it may be noted that it is not  
surprising that Asterius should be very prominent, since this is his  
speciality. The verbs of saying, with Asterius in the nominative, are:

(30:76A) προσέθηκε (i.e. added another meaning). 32:77A "However, I

suppose that even they will be unwilling to proceed to such great  
lengths, if they follow (πειθώνται + det.) Asterius the sophist.

For he, καίπερ σπουδάζων συνηγορεῖν the Arian heresy, and λέγων that  
the Unoriginate is one, τὰ ἐναντία τούτοις ἀντιφθέγγεται λέγων also

that the Wisdom . . . .". The corresponding passages of the De Decretis

(28-32) and De Synodis (46-47) have no reference to Asterius. In

I:37:88C-89A, we find, with reference to the Arian exegesis of Phil.

2:9-10: Ταῦτα, οὐ μόνον ~~εἰπέν~~<sup>εἰπέν</sup>, ἀλλὰ καὶ γράψαι τετολμήκασιν Εὐσεβίος τε  
καὶ Ἀρείος . and the reference to this in Theodoret, H.E. 1:8,

indicates that it is Eusebius of Nicomedia. II:24:200A (with reference

to the idea that the created world cannot take the direct activity of

the full Deity), Ταῦτα οὐ μόνον εἰρήκασιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ γράψαι τετολμήκασιν  
Εὐσεβίος τε καὶ Ἀρείος, καὶ ὁ θύσας Ἀστέριος. (II:28:205C) Asterius

the sophist γράψαι τετόλμηκεν . . (II:37:225B) "but Arius in his

Thalia συνεθέκεν and the sophist Asterius ἔγραψεν . . . . In II:40,

Asterius is again quoted at length on the question of the Second

Person being wise by participation in another wisdom; the verbs of



saying in which he is the nominative are : (232A) *δμολοχεῖ, γραφῶν*  
*οὕτως*. (232B) *λέγει*. In III:2 (beg.) we find a more sustained

attack on Asterius. (Beg. III:2) "But now let us also look at the

statements of Asterius, the retained pleader (*δυνηχόρου*) for the

heresy; . . . . he *γράφει* as follows: ' . . . . (Christ is

subordinate because his wisdom and power was not his own but the

Father's) . . . . ' Now, if he had been a child, this utterance

would have had an excuse for being there (*εἰρηκός*) on account of

his age, but when the man who wrote it (*ὁ γραψας*) is (*ἐστίν*) one

who bears the title of (*ὁ καλούμενος*) sophist and who professes

(*ἐπαγγελλόμενος*) to know everything, what a serious condemnation

does he deserve (*ἔξιος* + understood copula)! And does he not

show (*δείκνυσιν*) himself stranger to the Apostles, . . . . and

. . . ."

(Following phrases include two present participles and two present  
 tenses in subordinate clauses, Asterius being grammatical subject in all  
 cases.) This passage is accepted by Stülcken as the strongest evidence  
 that Asterius was still alive; certainly, the contrast between Asterius  
 having in the past written (*ὁ γραψας*) a book, and now being known as  
 (*καλούμενος*. . . . *ἐστίν*) a sophist and professing to know everything,  
 is at first sight suggestive, but even here there is another side.

Present continuous forms, as in English or Mishnaic Hebrew, are not  
 common even in Patristic Greek, and there is normally a rather different  
 explanation; in this case, it is by no means impossible, especially  
 in a work of this character, that the *ἐστίν* is to be considered by  
 itself, and therefore as the logical copula, and therefore timeless (as  
 distinct from present tense: on the basis that temporality is logically  
 a qualification of the logical terms and not a modification of the  
 copula.), and therefore that the two present participles in question

could refer to his post-mortem reputation - apart altogether from the fact that the date of his death is not known for certain. The translation that we are suggesting is ". . . . (Asterius is) . . . a man with a reputation of being a sophist and a self-professed know-all." The final personal reference is again to Asterius (following on a reference to heretics of past ages who professed the same doctrine), on the question of whether the Son came to be at the will of the Father, in III:60:449B-C: "And Asterius, the for the heresy, acquiescing in this, writes (γράφει) thus: ' . . . . ' In spite of the sophist having introduced (συνθεῖς) abundant irreligion into his words, . . . . he ended with the conclusion (εἰς τοῦτο συνέκλεισεν) that . . . ."

The reference in III:2 to Asterius is the strongest evidence, although far from conclusive, that he was alive. But in general, there is very little difference between the tenses of the verbs applied to Asterius, Eusebius, or Arius, the lastnamed being explicitly stated to have died, and no statement of this character having been made about the first two. Unfortunately, we cannot come to the conclusion that either Eusebius of Nicomedia or Asterius had not died <sup>(23)</sup>, because the context of the statement about the death of Arius, in I:3:17B, indicates that it was made to emphasise the fact that the Arians still took his name; ipso facto, this question could not have arisen about either of the other two men.

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(23) The date of the death of Asterius is uncertain. Stegmann, "Zur datierung . . . .", p.431, suggests that he may have died as late as 370, citing Jülicher, Realencyclopädie für klassische Altertumswissenschaften, Pauly-Wissowa, 1896. On the other hand, the author is convinced, as will be explained below, that this far-fetched hypothesis is not necessary for Stegmann to establish his case, and that Athanasius's treatment of Asterius in the Orations is most likely on the basis that he was actually dead at the time.



Now we must consider, by way of comparison, the corresponding references in other dogmatic works. To begin, "De Decretis Nicaeanae Synodi." It may be observed at the very outset that the very title, insofar as it refers directly to an ecclesiastical event, shows that there will be a different angle concerning the historical and personal references; there will naturally be more direct evidence of history and historical sequence than in the Contra Arianos. Ch.1, beg.

"Thou hast done well in signifying to me the discussion thou hast had with the advocates of Arianism, ἐν οἷς ἦσαν καὶ τῶν Εὐσεβίου πρὸς ἑταίρων . . . ."

Evidently this book was written to a friend who was having controversy with the Arians. Ch.2:47D (24)

"Yet wonder if they now behave thus (i.e. use the arguments of Caiaphas); for in no long time (μετ' ὀλίγον) they will turn to outrage, and next they will threaten 'the band and captain'".

Ch.2, last sentence:

"Now it happened thus, in the Council of Nicaea τοῖς περὶ Εὐσεβίου .  
(Follows ch.3, a description of the blatantly and outrageously Arian statements, as made by Eusebius of Nicomedia, and on the disgust and condemnation of the Council) . . . . (428C) 'as all signed it, οἱ περὶ Εὐσεβίου signed it also in those very words, of which they are now complaining, . . . . (i.e. the Homousion, etc.)  
. . . . And what is strange indeed, Eusebius of Caesarea in Palestine, who had denied the day before, but afterwards signed, sent to his Church a letter, saying that this was the Church's faith,

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(24) In this and in every citation from the "De Decretis", we are following the corrected pagination and columnation of Migne. For explanation of the error, see below, introductory remarks to the study of this book.

and the tradition of the Fathers; and made a public profession that they were before in error, and were rashly contending against the truth . . . And Acacius is aware of this, too, though he too through fear may pretend otherwise . . . . Accordingly I have appended at the end the letter of Eusebius, that thou mayest know from it the disrespect shown by Christ's enemies towards their own doctors, and singularly by Acacius himself."

This is an interesting extract, because it clearly differentiates between Eusebius of Nicomedia and Eusebius of Caesarea, of which more below. In Ch.4:42B, there is another intensely hostile reference to the Arian party as οἱ περὶ Εὐσεβίου, which description is repeated in ch.5:424B and C. Ch.8:429A, with reference to the idea that God created the Son who created the world: καὶ τοῦτο γὰρ ἡσυχώτερος ὁ θύσας ἔγραψεν· ὁ δὲ Ἄρειος μεταγράψας δέδωκε ταῖς ἰδίαις. In Ch.9:432B, the doctrine that the Son alone partakes of the Father even as we partake of the Son, is described as a doctrine ἣν ποτε λεγόντων καὶ τῶν περὶ Εὐσεβίου. suggesting that Eusebius of Nicomedia was already dead (he died in 342). In Ch.16:441D-444A, with reference to the Arian problem of the unity and multiplicity of the Word of God: "However, when they are beaten hence, and like τοὺς περὶ Εὐσεβίου are in these great straits (pres. parts. in each case), then they have (ἔχουσιν) this remaining plea, which Arius too in his ballads, and in his own *Thalia*, μυθολογεῖ as a new difficulty: 'Many words speaketh God Etc. . . .'"

Ch.18:445D: "Οἱ μὲν οὖν περὶ Εὐσεβίου, οὕτως ἐξεταζόμενοι τότε διὰ πολλῶν, and convicting themselves, as I said above, they signed . . . .", a direct reference to the Council of Nicaea, which is thus



of no direct help in the critical problem. Chapters 19-20 are concerned with a description of the Council of Nicea. The heretical party is again οἱ περὶ Εὐσεβίου, 20:449D; on the notion that the word is but one of a plurality of powers: (20:452A-B). Indeed Asterius, ὁ λεγόμενος Σοφιστὴς παρ' αὐτῶν μαθὼν ἔγραψε, καὶ πρὸ αὐτοῦ δὲ Ἀρείος μαθὼν ὡς περ εἴρηται - a statement disapproved by the Bishops at Nicea. Apart from another reference to the Arian party as οἱ περὶ Εὐσεβίου in ch.32:476A, this concludes the relevant references. Chs.25-27 are citations from Theognostus, Dionysius of Alexandria, Dionysius of Rome, and Origen, in support of the Nicene theology; chs.28-31 are the section on the λένητον almost identical to C.Ar I:30-34; one of the problems is that in the former, as distinct from the latter, there is no personal reference, even to Asterius.

The temporal and personal references (the latter, among those relevant, being to Arius alone) in the De Sententia Dionysii are so slight that they cannot be brought up here.

To turn to the Encyclical Letter to the Bishops of Egypt and Libya: Athanasius is certainly in the desert, during the Third Exile: ch.5 beg.:

"I heard during my sojourn in these parts . . . . (that the Arians were preparing a creed as a test for office) . . . . They indeed are already beginning (ἄρχονται) to molest the bishops of these parts."

Chapter 7 is a denunciation of the Churchmanship of the Arian party: (553A): Men who have been promoted by the Eusebians (προαχθέντες παρὰ τῶν περὶ Εὐσεβίου) for advocating this anti-Christian heresy, . . . . venture to define articles of faith . . . . They compose (τιθεῖσιν - note tense - 20 years after death of Arius) a Thalia

. . . ." (Here follows a list of contemporary Arian leaders, including Ursacius and Valens, Acacius, Basil of Ancyra, and George, the Arian nominee for the See of Alexandria, described as having been already promoted, which dates this letter in 356 or 357.) Ch.11f. is an account of the first breach between Arius and Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria - the prominence of this episode in this letter is an argument against the contention of Loofs (No. 8 above) concerning the Contra Arianos. Chs.18-19 tell the story of the death of Arius, who, throughout the letter is the major opponent, and he is even at this date, still referred to at times by the present tense (see above). In ch.22:589C comes the passage which states that the Meletians became schismatics 55 years before, and as for the Arians, "it is 36 years since they were pronounced heretics, καὶ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ἀπεβλήθησαν by the judgment of the whole Ecumenical Council". Even if we take the 36 years referring to the original condemnation by Alexander, this still indicates that this letter was written in 356 at the earliest.

The Epistles to Serapion contain very few definite references of the relevant sort: they were written later in the Third Exile. The only references are in Ep.IV. In 5: P.G.XXVI:645A, the opponents are the "Eunomians and Eudoxians and Eusebians". In 7:648B, the argument that the Father is the Spirit's grandfather is presented by ὁ ἐν Καισαρείᾳ καὶ ὁ ἐν Σκυθοπόλει (Migne; Rag. and Seguer. περὶ Εὐσεβίου καὶ Πατροφίλου); the individuals are, respectively, Acacius and Patrophilus.

The De Synodis, an account of the Councils of Ariminum and Seleucia, and the conciliar history of Arianism in general, of course, teems with references to contemporary Church (or Church (?)) leaders, and therefore it will be only possible to note the references made,



in a work certainly written as late as 360, to the three villains of the Contra Arianos I-III, Arius, Eusebius and Asterius. Ch.13:P.G. XXVI:7040 (referring to the Arians at Ariminum): "and especially what can Asacius say of his own master, Eusebius (of Caesarea), who not only gave his own signature in the Nicene Council, but even in a letter stated to his flock that it was the true faith which the Council had declared? . . . ."

Chapters 15-16 are a description of Arianism in its origins in the days of Arius and Alexander himself; it is in general in the aorist, except that the long quotation from the Thalia in ch.15 is introduced by *γράφει*. Chapters 17 to 19 are devoted to the other supporters of Arianism before and during the Council of Nicea. Again, the normal tense is the aorist. The references to the Eusebii must be noted (712A-B):

"And Eusebius of Nicomedia wrote *κατὰ περίτρον* to Arius . . . .  
 And Eusebius of Caesarea in Palestine . . . . did not scruple to say plainly that Christ was not true God . . . ." (and so on, concerning other personalities). (Ch.18 beg.) "On the whole, then, such were their statements, that it was as if they were all in competition with each other as to who should make the heresy more impious, and display it more nakedly . . . . *καὶ Ἀστέριος δὲ τις* from Cappadocia, a many-headed Sophist, *εἰς ὧν τῶν περὶ Εὐσεβίου*, whom they could not advance into the clergy, as he had sacrificed . . . . *ποιεῖ* (note present tense) *μετὰ γνώμης τῶν περὶ Εὐσεβίου συνταγματίου* . . . ."

In the remainder of ch.18 and in ch.19 the aorist is generally used for the personal activities of Asterius, but the present for his writings. Stülcken <sup>(25)</sup> believes that the *Ἀστέριος... τις* and the reference to his life history is a sign that he was at that time almost forgotten, as

compared with the age of the Contra Arianos, when he was one of the three supreme representatives of Arianism. This will not do; on Stülcken's own hypothesis, the denunciations of him by Athanasius in the latter works (written, according to Stülcken, in or about 338) would have militated against his oblivion. On the contrary, it is patent that the language of Athanasius, besides being influenced by the historical character of the work, is essentially a rhetorical device to draw attention to Asterius or his work as being a sort of climax in depravity (apart, of course, from Arius himself). And many people were already mentioned in ch.16, without the  $\tau\epsilon\varsigma$  and without reference to their biographical details, who would have been much more liable to be forgotten by 360 than Asterius. In fact, the  $\tau\iota\varsigma$  is the exact linguistic equivalent of the "Ma" of the Catalogue Aria in "Don Giovanni" <sup>(26)</sup>. This interpretation is absolutely confirmed by the fact that this particular section of the "De Synodis", which deals with the development of the heresy from its origins to its climactic and mature form, in fact closes with Asterius and his statements. There is one further reference that is relevant for our purpose, 36:757B, where the typical Arian accusation is made to rebound back on its authors, to the effect that at the Dedication (341)  $\text{o}\dot{\iota}\ \pi\epsilon\rho\dot{\iota}\ \text{\textit{\text{A}\kappa\alpha\iota\kappa\iota\omicron\nu\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \text{E}\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\beta\iota\omicron\nu}}$  used non-Scriptural expressions. This is more likely to be a reference to Eusebius of Nicomedia than a charge against a continuing policy of the Caesarean Episcopate.

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(26) In Italia, sei cento e quaranta,  
 In Almagna, due cento e trent'una,  
 Cento in Francia, in Turchia novant'una,  
 Ma, ma, ma, in Ispagna,  
 Ma in Ispagna, son gia mille e tre,  
 Mille e tre!



As a preliminary to the formulation of definite conclusions from all this, it is necessary to make it quite clear what was the position of Athanasius with regard to Eusebius of Caesarea, since for other reasons as well this has to be done at some stage of this study. To begin, there are four bitterly hostile references in the "Apologia Contra Arianos", an account of the early history of the Arian heresy, concerned chiefly with events about 340 which were dominated by the Marcellan controversy and Athanasius's involvement in it. 8:PG XXV

261C: "Did not οἱ περὶ Εὐσεβίου inflict their Ariomania upon us?

Did they not urge on the others of their party? Have we not always written against them as professing the doctrines of the Arians? Was not Eusebius of Caesarea in Palestine accused by our confessors of sacrificing to idols? . . ." (The last sentence is a tu quoque, to the charges made against Athanasius.)

This reference is from the Encyclical Letter of the Church of Egypt in defence of Athanasius. Again, in 47:332B, from the Encyclical of the Council of Sardica: "The book of our fellow-minister Marcellus was also read, by which the fraud τῶν περὶ Εὐσεβίου was discovered . . . . (Follows an exculpation of Marcellus of Anoyra) . . . .

Our fellow-minister Asclepias also produced reports which had been drawn up in Antioch, παρόντων τῶν κατηγόρων, καὶ Εὐσεβίου τοῦ Καισαρείας . . . . (i.e. in the presence of his accusers, led by E. of C.) 77:389C, concluding the submission of the orthodox

bishops to the Council of Tyre: ". . . beware . . . of taking part in the designs τῶν περὶ Εὐσεβίου. For you know, as we have said before, that they are our enemies, and are aware why Eusebius of Caesarea became an enemy last year." (i.e.

Athanasius refused an invitation to the Synod at Caesarea -

Theodoret, Eccl.Hist. I:28). In 87:405A, in the course of the letter of the Emperor Constantine to the Council of Tyre, he tells how, after the Arians had earned their first rebuff, "Having learnt this, οἱ περὶ Εὐσεβίου . . . prevented the rest of the bishops from going up, and only went themselves, that is, Eusebius Theognius, Patrophilus, the other Eusebius, Ursacius and Valens . . . (and presented the accusation that Athanasius ran a corner in wheat) . . . ."

These four references, none of which, incidentally, was written directly and primarily by Athanasius himself, suggest that Eusebius of Caesarea had wantonly associated himself with the Arians in the late thirties and generated intense bitterness thereby. On the other hand, it appeared to many, and certainly to Eusebius of Caesarea, that the principal scandal was that of Marcellus of Ancyra, which was undoubtedly what dictated Eusebius's activities; even his best friends cannot deny that his dislike of Marcellus and his theology blinded him to virtually everything else. But in all the anti-Arian dogmatic writings we get a rather different view. In the first place, let us expand a little the reference in De Decr.3. After presenting his Letter to his Church in a very favourable light, Athanasius continues, "And in this way he got into difficulty; for while he was excusing himself, he went on to attack the Arians on the ground that, in stating that 'the Son was not before His generation', they thereby rejected His existence before His birth <sup>(27)</sup> in the flesh."

This patently refers to the penultimate paragraph of the Letter of Eusebius of Caesarea, which Athanasius quotes in full as an Appendix

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(27) γενέσθωσ , κίανω. γενέσθωσ , Opitz.



to the "De Decretis", and which is also quoted by Theodoret, Eccl. Hist. I:12:1, and Socrates, Eccl. Hist. I:8:35<sup>(28)</sup>. The incriminating paragraph, omitted by Socrates which is generally the most friendly towards Eusebius, appears to allow it as admissible that the Son had a pre-incarnate and eternal existence only in the plen of God or only in potentiality, and is thus extremely suspect indeed<sup>(29)</sup>. But since our prime interest is not in what Eusebius of Caesarea actually believed, but in how he appeared to Athanasius, and from this point of view the corresponding statement in "De Synodis" is of the greatest interest (13:704C): ". . . (he) even charged it upon the Arians, that their position that the Son was not before His generation was not even consistent with His being before Mary."

That is, however, confused Eusebius actually was, Athanasius could actually see in him his own later argument of C.Ar. I:37-38 and following (see also Newman's notes on ch. 38), being the exegesis of Philip. 2:5-11, that the plausible Arian arguments cannot improve Arianism, but<sup>only</sup> the heresy of Paul of Samosata<sup>(30)</sup>. There is a similar argument later in "Ad Afros" 6:P.G. XXVI:1040C (written 369): "And Eusebius knew this, who became Bishop of Caesarea. He was first a fellow-traveller (*συντρέχων*) with the Arian heresy, but later he signed at the Council of Nicaea and wrote to his own people, affirming, 'We know that certain eloquent and distinguished bishops and writers even of ancient date used the title of Homousios concerning the Godhead of the Father and Son.'"

This picture, as presented by these citations from Athanasius, which

(28) Opitz. Urkunde 22.

(29) Admittedly it was presented as a commentary by Constantine.

(30) See below pp. 368-70 and .

on any chronology of his works cover his whole mature theological life, is confirmed by the theology of Eusebius of Caesarea in his own writings; it would be impossible to examine this now, although we shall say more about it later <sup>(31)</sup>. The picture is of a man tainted with the general atmosphere of Arianism, but who recoiled at Nicaea from the excesses of its leaders, and whose letter to his Church is evidence of his own revulsion and of the justice of Athanasius's denunciations of that party; as far as possible from being a leader of the heretical movement. The last epithet that can be applied to this man is "Ariomaniac". Finally, all this is evidence that the numerous hostile references to "Eusebius" refer to Eusebius of Nicomedia, as applies always in the *Orationes Contra Arianos* I-III; the same would apply to the phrase *ὁ περὶ Εὐσεβίου*.

It is true that, as Stülcken says, there is a greater tendency to talk in the past tense about Arius, Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Asterius in the other dogmatic works than in *Contra Arianos* I-III, but this difference is not great, and is fully accounted for by the different character of the latter works, which Stülcken has not really taken into account enough. It is also true that the only historical characters mentioned in the *Contra Arianos* are Asterius, Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Arius himself; this contrasts with the frequent mention of other people by name in the other works. But this should not be simply taken as evidence for the early dating of the *Contra Arianos* I-III, as Stülcken does. All the other dogmatic works mentioned have historical and/or ecclesiastical elements. The *De Decretis* points back explicitly to the Council of Nicaea; the *Ep. Encycl. ad Episc. Aeg. et Lib.* is exactly what its name implies; the *De Synodis* is, with an appendix on

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(31) See below pp. 378-82.



certain dogmatic questions, specifically a conciliar history of Arianism; in the last work, the chief dogmatic subject is in the nature of an exception that manifestly proves the rule, since it is the Homoeousion, which was the great disputed point about the Council of Nicaea. Now, in this sort of book, it is essential to mention people who were, at their time, the ecclesiastical and practical leaders of the opposing party. On the other hand, the Contra Arianos I-III is totally different in character in that it concerns itself with the basic theological and exegetical issues, and that there is the bare minimum of historical, personal and ecclesiastical data. It was meant to show the theological raw material of the conciliar decisions at Nicaea, in a way that would make it relevant to Jerusalem in the first century and Edinburgh and Sydney in the twentieth, in the same way as it was relevant to Alexandria in the fourth. The fact that Athanasius was so reticent about conciliar decisions in his theological magnum opus is the best possible refutation of the position of Newman, that Athanasius regarded the authority of the Church, in the "Catholic" sense, as an essential determinant of theology (32). Now, in such a work, the criteria that govern whether an individual is mentioned or not are quite different. There is no point in mentioning every little pro tempore leader of the Arian faction; the people who will be mentioned are the intellectual leaders or most typical representatives of Arianism, and the question even of whether they are still alive at the time assumes secondary importance. Now, it is true that the only characters mentioned

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(32) Of the numerous instances that can be cited, see for example the major note on "Tradition", Select Treatises of St. Athanasius in Controversy with the Arians, Vol. II (Appendices etc.) (1881), pp. 311-314. See also Möhler, "Athanasius der Grosse . . . .", 111-16, and indeed almost all Roman Catholic Athanasian study.



as Arians in the Contra Arianos I-III are Arius himself, Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Asterius the Sophist. Arius died in 335, Eusebius of Nicomedia died in 342, and, although we do not know the date of death of Asterius, the last we hear of him was about the same time, and he must then have been at least middle age. But the real critical question is not - when were these people dead? but rather - when did they cease to be the outstanding leaders or typical representatives of Arianism; that is, when did they cease to be uppermost in the mind of their opponents, in the way that Marx and Lenin are still uppermost in the mind of anti-Communists, or Hitler in the minds of anti-Germans (33) ?

Now, the first thing to remember in this connection, and in the situation as it was in the fourth century, is the inertia of even the most active and sensitive minds. The worst defect of German scholars in their golden age was that they had no idea of how men's minds work in a revolutionary age. It is the first generation of revolutionary leaders that makes the overwhelming impression, and after that it takes quite a while for the second generation to establish itself in the general consciousness for what it really is, as distinct from a re-incarnation or pale reflection of the first generation. The whole

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(33) The author, being an Australian, vividly remembers as another example the "Communist Party Dissolution Act, 1950" of the Commonwealth of Australia (Federal Government), which was found ultra vires the Defence Power of the Commonwealth; the constitutional referendum necessary to validate it failed by a narrow margin. In it Communism was defined with reference to Marx and Lenin, who had been dead for 67 and 26 years respectively, even though Stalin was at the height of his reputation as a Communist theorist. If it is answered that the analogy did not apply because of Stalin's position, being still alive, in a State with which Australia was legally in normal relations, Athanasius would have had an even more compelling motive for defining Arianism in terms of dead men if possible. In an ad hoc, polemical treatise, it would be permissible to castigate living Arian leaders, but in a work that seeks to expound the inner theological significance - or rather, for Athanasius, diabolical significance - of Arianism a far more serious matter, he would have had to confine himself to dead men for two reasons, one very mundane, and the other most solemnly religious; men still alive need more time normally before they can be evaluated, and they may yet repent.



(34)

history of human faction provides countless examples . The second generation must do something fairly drastic to compete successfully against the memory of the first generation. Now, when we examine the situation at that time, we find that, not only did the three men concerned have the advantage of being the first generation, but their start was increased by other factors which would make it very difficult for the next generation to catch up. Arius, Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Asterius the Sophist each typified one particularly serious aspect of the Arian party in a way that it was virtually impossible for there to be a later rival. Of Arius, the eponymous founder of the party, nothing more is necessary (35) , but, even apart from this, Arius typifies

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(34) Even in the detronology of the most fanatical anti-Communists, Stalin (see also previous note) never even began to rival Marx and Lenin until the Liquidation of the Kulaks and the fantastic Furge of 1935-38, almost a decade after he exercised de facto supreme power in the Soviet Union. Indeed, it is doubtful whether even now (1982), after seven years, it is generally appreciated with sufficient exactitude how Khrushchev resembles and differs from his predecessors, along with the corresponding changes in Communism. How long was it before it was understood, either in countries like Britain or in Germany itself for that matter, how Hitler differed from the former Prussian militarism? To take a definitely authenticated and documented earlier example, the story of Beethoven's dedication of the Third Symphony ("Eroica") to Napoleon and his tearing up of the page when he heard that Napoleon had had himself proclaimed Emperor on June 18th, 1804, indicates that for a long time Napoleon was simply thought to be another and more efficient old-style French Revolutionary hero like Marat, Danton, and Robespierre.

(35) Newman's statement, for which there is no parallel in any other writer that the author knows, that Arius was probably only a tool in the hands of quieter and more capable men ("Arians of the Fourth Century", pp.40-41 and 208), presumably the Eusebians, can only be understood as an attempt to bolster up his favourite Lucianic hypothesis on the origin of Arianism. The passages that he cites from Athanasius to prove that he holds this opinion, (De Decr.8 and 20, Hist.Arianorum 66, De Syn.22) do not prove it at all. Even the reference in De Decr.8, which we have already cited in another connection, that Arius transcribed from Asterius the doctrine that the Son as a creature was a cosmologically necessary intermediary does not prove the case, since this was an emphasis which we know on other grounds to be characteristic of Asterius rather than Arius himself.



one particularly unpleasant aspect of Arianism in a way that nobody else does - in his addiction to the profanum vulgus (in every sense) and his descending to propaganda among them in their own terms. Proletarianism and its relation to Christianity is a most fascinating subject, on which more will be said later; Now we find it also in Arianism in a peculiarly virulent form, and Arius's combination of extreme intellectual sophistication and proletarianism is equalled or surpassed in history only by Karl Marx. (Incidentally, there are too many resemblances between Arianism and Communism for it to be pure coincidence). Eusebius of Nicomedia was a rather different problem. For one thing, he was a bishop, and was bolder than most others in putting down in black and white what others would say more evasively and privately (C.Ar.I:37:88C-89A and II:24:200A). He was also as suspect in his attitude to Nicaea as anybody who did not actually fail to sign the creed as well as being the floor leader of the Arians in that Council. But the main point was that he was a notorious political intriguer in high places, both with Constantine and Constantius. It was this that converted Arianism from an apparently defeated, non-viable <sup>offed</sup> off-branch into a dangerous menace to the peace of the Church; it was to his intrigues, ultimately, that Athanasius owed his own five exiles; these, along with Arius's propaganda among the proletariat, constituted the political pincers movement that all but squeezed the Nicenes to death. Asterius was the intellectual of this trip, the philosophical brain of the movement, and, in spite of (36) Robertson, his system will stand intellectual comparison with any

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(36) L.N.P.-N.F. introd. XXVIII f. For a fuller discussion of Asterius, see below, p.350-58.



heretic's. Also, he was a rank outsider, since having sacrificed to idols during the persecution, he was excluded from the clergy, and, as long as the Arians took him as their intellectual leader, he was a living proof to the Nicenes that Arianism was an "unkirchliche  
(37)  
Dogmatik" .

Thus Arius, the founder of the heresy and the supreme example of the slummer, Eusebius of Nicomedia, the very type of the political prelate at his worst, and Asterius, the obviously alien intellectual  
(38)  
par excellence, made a most outstanding and notorious trio .

And there was present, too, the one additional factor that could bring them into further relief; each was the first of his kind, since persecution and lack of status had previously precluded these species from existing. Finally, probably nobody in the second generation of Arians, except possibly Eunomius and the Emperor Constantius himself, would have been intellectually or otherwise capable of rivalling these three except under the most favourable circumstances. The upshot of all this is that the second generation of Arians would have had to be fairly drastic to rate a mention in a work such as the Contra Arianos. Almost certainly, nothing less than the explosive outbreak of 356 would have been sufficient. Can we say, conversely, that if they had been written after 356, there would have been references to the second generation? Probably yes, although the answer is uncertain. The references quoted above in the Ad Serap. IV

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(37) For this issue, and the reason for Barth's change from "Christliche Dogmatik" (Vol. I 1st ed. 1927) to "Kirchliche Dogmatik" (Vol. I Pt. I 2nd ed. 1932 - the only edition translated into English - and following volumes) see Introduction to Vol. I Pt. I (2nd ed.). On p. IX (E.T.) he maintains rightly that dogmatics is not "free" but bound to the Church as its proper field.

(38) This argument has been put forward by Stegmann "Zur Datierung" p. 434.

do not help us much, as they all refer to Pneumatic heresies; if the reference to the "Eusebii" refers to Eusebius of Nicomedia, and not to Eusebius of Caesarea in his capacity as the precursor of the Pneumatic heretic Acacius, this is <sup>another indication</sup> of the indelible infamy of Eusebius of Nicomedia. The diatribal apostrophe to Acacius and Eudoxius in the dogmatic portion of the De Synodis, ch.38, is a better sign, although the historical and conciliar character of the work as a whole would be not without influence. On the whole, we can admit that the total lack of reference to the second generation of Arians, along with the character of the references to Constantius, suggests that the terminus ad quem for the composition of Cont. Arianos I-III is Athanasius's expulsion on 8th February, 356, or, at the latest, very early in the Third Exile. Owing to the scale of the work, this just excludes the traditional dating, but it leaves any earlier date open, as well as all dates up to A.D.356.

The next argument is that the anathema of the Synod of Philippopolis (343), repeated in the Macrosthich (345), against those who deny that the Son came to be at the will of the Father, and thus allegedly maintain that it was by external necessity, was aimed at Athanasius Contra Arianos III:58-67 (a position also accepted by Harnack, Hist Dogm. (3rd ed.) Vol.II, p.239, note 4 (Germ.ed.), which was therefore written before that date. The ground is that, in these chapters, Athanasius never referred to the doctrine which he contested as an actual formula of a Synod, but rather merely as a tenet of the relatively anonymous "Arians". On the other hand, this is more or less fully explained by the general character of the Contra Arianos; as we have said above, the aim of Athanasius is patently to present



the theology of the Arian controversy, on the principle of (with apologies to Anselm) *remotis conciliis actisque eorum omnibus*; there is no explicit reference even to Nicea. On the contrary, there are some grounds at least as cogent for coming to the reverse conclusion.

The formulae of these anathemas are as follows: (Council of Philippopolis, 343; 1st Confession of Sirmium, 351, Anathema XXV; see <sup>De</sup> Synodis, ch.27:26th or penultimate anathema: "Whosoever shall say that the Son has been generated, the Father not willing it, be he anathema. For it was not by compulsion, led on by physical necessity, as if He did not wish it, that the Father generated the Son . . . ."

and the Macrostich, De Syn.26, final anathema: "And at the same time, those who irreverently say that the Son has been generated not by choice or will, thus encompassing God with a necessity that excludes choice or purpose, so that He begat the Son unwillingly we account as most irreligious and alien to the Church . . . ."

Now, in each case the dilemma is clearly being postulated: EITHER The Son's generation was an act of the Divine Will, OR it was formerly and/or efficiently caused, either causation compromising the Father's Deity; one of these must be accepted, not both. But this is the very point that Athanasius so convincingly denied in c.Ar.III:62; the dilemma is not really exhaustive, as there is a third possibility, which is actually the correct one. God the Father's generation of the Son is in the very nature (φύσις) of God so that the dilemma is nugatory. Thus, it is by no means self-evident that Athanasius would

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(39) Οὐ γὰρ βιάσθεις ὁ Πατήρ, ὑπὸ ἀνάγκης φυσικῆς ἀχθεῖς, ὥς οὐκ ἠθέλην, ἐγεννήσας τὸν Υἱόν. . . .  
 (40) τοὺς οὐ βούλησε, οὐδὲ θελήσει γεγενῆσθαι τὸν Υἱὸν εἰρηκότας, ἀνευλαβῶς, ἀνάγκην δὲ δηλονότι, ἀβουλήτον καὶ ἀπροαίρετον περὶ τε θεϊκότητος καὶ τῆς Θεῶν, ἵνα ἁκὼν γεννήσῃ τὸν Υἱόν, . . .

ever have exposed himself so crassly to these anathemas. Even if they were directed against Athanasius, they need not have referred to the Contra Arianos, or indeed to any writings of Athanasius; after all, he was a responsible and active Bishop of one of the two or three principal sees of Christendom, who could not have kept to his study even if he wanted to; such a man would not need writings to make his doctrine clear to his contemporaries. Finally, the anathemas need not have been directed against any statement of any person at all: the normal way of enforcing a doctrine is to anathematize its contradictory, or those who contradict it. These considerations make it rather more likely that Athanasius, in C.Ar. III:58-67, was answering these anathemas; at any rate, he conclusively demolished their argument. Of course, we must remember that it would have been very difficult to answer the argument of Athanasius in c.Ar.III:62 without blowing the gaffe, which the Synods in question did not wish to do. <sup>Any effective denunciation of</sup> ^ Athanasius C.Ar.III:58-67 would have to be much more drastic than these two anathemas. The least that would be required would be a wholesale condemnation of the whole notion of  $\phi\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$  as applied to God or any of His acts or attributes, which in this context would include the generation of the "Son". Since this was the word that Athanasius used in the section virtually passim, a lot more would have been required than one participial phrase involving an adjectival derivative of the word. We have already shown above, in our review of the use of the word in the "Contra Gentes", that there was enough ambiguity in the traditional ~~meaning of the word~~ <sup>meaning of the word to make such an attempt possible, as a drastic extension of</sup> meaning of the reasoning in the anathemas as we have them, and this sort of blanket ban on the whole word or concept was the step actually taken in 359 by the Arianizers with regard to  $\sigma\upsilon\lambda\lambda\omicron\gamma\mu\alpha$  (De Syn.30).



When Athanasius has based his whole argument on the ultimacy of God's nature compared with God's will, nothing less than this drastic step would have been necessary on Stülcken's theory.

Of course, it is true that the doctrines in these two Anathemas were actually Arian teaching from the earliest stages, e.g. Arius, Thalia (De Syn.15: ". . . for He existed at the will of the Father" (41) (42)

. . . Wisdom existed as Wisdom by the will of the wise God (43) And in the Letter of Arius to Eusebius of Nicomedia : ". . . but by will (Θελήματι) and counsel (βουλή) He has subsisted before times and before ages . . ."

(44) And in Letter of Eusebius of Nicomedia to Paulinus of Tyre : ". . . the existence of the Son depends ἐπὶ τὴν βουλήν τοῦ Πατρὸς "

If this is taken as a determining factor in the critical judgment, it (45) simply makes any positive chronological estimate impossible .

although Stülcken's argument would be affected, if anything, the worse. But this simply increases the significance of another argument against Stülcken, and that is the way in which Athanasius introduces, and subsequently handles, these chapters. Admittedly, Newman (notes on Or.III:58) has pointed out that the style and vocabulary of this section are more closely allied to C.Ar.I and II than to the remainder of C.Ar.III, almost as if it was a misplaced section of one of the earlier Oration. On the other hand, we shall give reasons for maintaining

(41) ὁπρὸς δὲ Θελήσει πατρὶα (708A).

(42) Ἡ σοφία σοφία ὁπρὸς σοφου Θεοῦ Θελήματι.

(43) Epiphanius, Haer.69:6(I). Theod. Ecol.Hist. I:5. Opitz, Urkunden . . . , Urk.I.

(44) Theod. Ecol. Hist. I:5. Opitz., Urk.8

(45) Stegmann, "Zur Datierung . . ." p.438, makes this point against Stülcken.

that this section, although a reversion to the type of material handled earlier, is in its correct place, and once we have accepted this it is not altogether unreasonable to postulate that the correspondence in subject matter to the earlier Orations would have generated a corresponding correspondence in vocabulary and style.

Now, this section is introduced as follows: (III:58,445C) (Now that we have discussed the basic tenets of Arianism, and shown at great length that their claims to be Scriptural are invalid) "But,

. . . . a heretic is a wicked thing in truth, . . . For behold, though they are convicted on all points . . . they, . . . like hydras, . . . invent for themselves other questions Juddae and foolish, and new expedients, . . . (ch.59) After so many proofs against them, . . . they say, 'Be it so, interpret these references thus, and gain the victory in reasonings and proofs; still, you must admit that the Son has received being from the

Father at His will and pleasure' . . .". Athanasius points out at once that "will" is a wrong way of talking about the matter, for reasons which have been already discussed and which are briefly recapitulated. Then, he comes to the main issue, and (ch.62 beg.) introduces, for refutation, the argument about necessity: "If then

there is another Word of God, then let the Son be originated by a word, but if there be not, as is the case, . . . , does not this expose the many-headed craftiness (*πανουργία*) of these men? in that, feeling shame at saying 'work' . . . etc. . . .

yet in another way they assert that he is a creature, putting forward 'will' . . .". It is evident from these passages that,

following on his discussion of the fundamentals of Arianism and his detailed refutation of their Scriptural claims, Athanasius is now



discussing the trick statements whereby the Arians tried to introduce their beliefs by the back door, statements superficially plausible but which nevertheless really imply Arianism. What would be a more natural place to propound such statements than an Arian or crypto-Arian Synod? Thus this is another factor that makes it more likely that c.Ar,III:58-67 is a refutation of the anathemas in question than vice versa (46)

The next argument of Stülcken (47) is that Athanasius is far less sure in his explanation of Prov.8:22 LXX, especially the notorious <sup>(48)</sup> ἔκτισε, in c.Ar.II:(18)44-82 than in other places, i.e. De Decr.13f., De Sent.Dion 1b, Epist.Encycl.ad Episc.Aeg. and Lib.17, Ep.II ad Serap.de Sp.Sanct.7. ". . . dort eine allgemeine Unsicherheit: das

soll auf die Menschwerdung gehen und vom Logos ausgesagt werden, weil er einen geschaffenen Leib hat; es soll = κατεστήσῃ (49) sein; es soll endlich rational gedeutet werden, weil Gott allen Menschen seine göttlichen σοφία eigeschaffen hat. In De Decr. u.s.w. tritt

(46) Of course, the argument can conceivably be brought forward that Athanasius had simply forgotten to discuss the issue in the earlier portion of the Orations, i.e. I:1-36, but the author feels, no doubt subjectively, that this does not really affect the issue. In the context of the general refutation of Arian principles in the first half of C.Ar.I, Athanasius might well have not felt the need to give this any special attention, since it would have been merely an intension of the basic statement that the Son-Logos is a creature. Nor would it have quite the gross scandal of the statement that the Son is ὑπερβολός. Where statements about the Son coming to be at the will of the Father are so supremely dangerous is in the context of Arianizing creeds which are apparently, and in fact, completely orthodox everywhere except at this one point, which is precisely the context in which Athanasius is treating this sort of statement here. They belong, in other words, to the deceptive propaganda rather than the ruthless and blatant enunciation of basic principle, and this particular statement would be supremely dangerous and deceptive because it would imply that the orthodox theologians were at one with, for instance, such a notorious and hated heresy as Marcionitism.

(47) op.cit. p.48.

(48) created. Κύριος ἔκτισέ με ἀρχὴν πῶν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰ ἔργα.

(49) established.



dagegen mit absoluter Sicherheit die eine Erklärung aus, dass

es auf die Menschwerdung zu deuten sei; . . ." The latter half of Stülcken's statement, that in the other four works Athanasius is in absolutely no doubt about his exegesis, is true, but, pace Stülcken there is no "uncertainty" in the Contra Arianos either. Admittedly, there is a greater complexity, but hardly greater than would be warranted by the greater length of the relevant section. In fact, we shall show, in our detailed study, that the very complexity of the Contra Arianos is the exact opposite of primeval chaos; it is a genuine development along, in the strictest sense, the line followed in the other four places, which is also beyond question the whole basis of c.Ar.II:44-82. Unfortunately, Stülcken does not give detailed references for his analysis of c.Ar.II:44-82, but apparently the former of this two alleged alternative interpretations is based on 53:257C-260A: Τὸ ἄρα, ἐκτίσε, καὶ τὸ ἐκπλάσσε, καὶ τὸ κατέστησε, τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχοντα διάνοιαν, (cf. Is. 49:5, Ps. 8:7 & 2:6, all LXX) οὐ τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ εἶναι αὐτὸν, οὐδὲ τὴν οὐσίαν αὐτοῦ κτιστὴν δείκνυσιν, ἀλλὰ τὴν εἰς ἡμᾶς αὐτοῦ κατ'εὐεργεσίαν γενομένην ἀνανέωσιν. (50) It is hard to see what passages Stülcken had in mind by his second alternative, but it evidently refers to the doctrine elaborated later in this section, passim, that our predestination is in Christ, and that this is the primary sense in which we are created "in wisdom". Athanasius already applies the ἐκτίσε to the Incarnation of the Word in creaturely flesh for our sakes. What Athanasius is doing here is going on to say that,

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(50) "So, 'He created', and 'He formed', and 'He set', have the same meaning and do not denote the beginning of His being, or His essence as a created essence, but His beneficent renovation which came to pass for us".



when we think of the Incarnation, we must always go on forward to think of the establishment of Christ's Kingdom, and, further, of our gracious privilege of participation in it. What is more, we must needs look backwards, to see all this as our Predestination in Christ, the very purpose for which we were created. And it shall be shown that this full understanding of the Incarnation is the true climax of all the theology of Athanasius. Thus another argument of Stülcken recoils on its own author.

The next argument of Stülcken <sup>(51)</sup> concerns the lack of mention in c.Ar.I-III of the Homousion, as compared with both De Decretis, De Synodis, and Ep.II ad Serapionem de Spiritu Sancto. This is a critical problem of considerable difficulty, and so will be deferred for a time.

The final argument of Stülcken <sup>(52)</sup> is his study of the relation between c.Ar.I:30ff, and De Decr.28ff., in each of which the question of the ἀχένητον is treated, and between which there is in places almost verbal agreement. This is specially marked between c.Ar.I:33:P.G.XXVI 80C ch.34, end of last sentence but one; and De Decr.30:P.G.XXV 472D to 31:473C (. . . Πατρὶ λόγον). He rightly does not stress the omission from the De Decretis of the examples given in the Contra Arianos of the various meanings of ἀχένητος, or on the difference between the more popular but less accurate μηδὲ ὁλως ἔχον ἑαυτοῦ τινὰ πατέρα (c.Ar.I:76A) and τὸ μὴ ἔχον τοῦ εἶναι τὸν ἀίτιον (De Decr.29:469D); attributing this difference to the wider audience for the former work. The next argument

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(51) op.cit p.48

(52) op.cit pp.48-50

that Athanasius must have omitted the name of Asterius (see above) because it was no longer topical, as compared with Contra Arianos, is a stronger argument; the alternative, that Athanasius, at the date at which this was written, did not know or ignored Asterius's responsibility for these arguments, is of itself, rather harder to accept. But on the other hand, the mere fact of the larger scale of the "Contra Arianos" could have compelled Athanasius to give more attention to the "Two Wisdoms" argument of Asterius. Also, in the major sections mentioned above, which almost duplicate each other, the section in the De Decr. is the shorter, owing to the omission of "superfluous" words, such as c.Ar.I:33:80C = De Decr.30:472D: it would have been βέλτιον [καὶ μείζον] for them to acknowledge and call God Father. 80C and 473A: For in calling God Unoriginate, they are, as I said before, calling Him ἐκ τῶν γενόμενων [ἐρχων]. C.Ar.34 beg.: Οὐκοῦν εὐσεβέστερον καὶ ἀληθές (= ? ἀληθέστερον) ἂν εἴη μᾶλλον to indicate and describe God from the Son as Father . . . and De Decr.31 beg.: Οὐκοῦν καὶ μᾶλλον ἢ [ὡς ἐκ τῶν γενόμενων] ἀληθέστερον ἂν εἴη etc. 81B-473B the term ἀγενήτος has a variable sense, [ὥστε τοῦ ἐρωτωμένου περὶ αὐτοῦ εἰς πολλὰ τὴν διάνοιαν περιφέρειται]. (In all cases, the words in square brackets are included in the Contra Arianos; omitted in De Decr.) Although it can be maintained that Athanasius lengthened his material in the Contra Arianos to conform with the rhetorical character of the work, for the sake of that very real entity that can only be called (53) prose scansion, this argument of Stülcken is substantial.

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(53) Opitz. (notes on De Decr.28) agrees with Stülcken on this point.



However, when we turn to the last argument of Stülken, we find (54) once again that his material really emphatically disproves his case. He maintains that the substitution of τὸ δὲ Πατὴρ ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ μόνον σημαίνεται καὶ ἴστανται (c.Ar.I:34:81B) by τὸ δὲ τοῦ Πατρὸς ὄνομα τὸ ἰδίον ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας αὐτοῦ γέννημα γινώσκεται (De Decr. 31:473A-B), is comprehensible on the grounds of Athanasius's great interest in the Nicene formula ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ Πατρὸς, as far as the "De Decretis" is concerned, but that there is no reason for making the reverse substitution. The same relation is said to hold between the ἐκ τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ τοῦτον σημαίνει of c.Ar.I:33:81A (i.e. the title Father indicates Him in relation to the Son, as against the title ἀγέννητος, whose users ἐκ τῶν γενομένων ἔργων αὐτὸν ποιητὴν . . . λέγουσιν, as compared with the corresponding εὐθύς ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ σημαίνει of De Decr.30:475A, the reason for this substitution being possibly the influence of almost the identical clause in Dionysius of Alexandria, quoted in De Sent.Dion 17:P.G.XXV; Athanasius, in De Decr.25:461A, has already quoted Dionysius of Alexandria as an authority in support of the Homousion, in its true sense. Now, these arguments are plausible, but they do work either way, provided that we can see a reason for making the reverse substitution. And such a reason is available in terms of the context of the passages. However, at this stage we shall have to postpone any further consideration of this question, since it has become a matter of the greatest importance to see what exactly was the argument of Athanasius. Normally, it is necessary to carry out such investigations with no reference at all to the doctrinal content of the works being studied, but here it is a case of the whole formal structure of Athanasius's

argument becoming the point of issue. When we examine this, we find that, once again, this argument of Stülcken rebounds on its author, and uncover another most important argument in favour of a later date for the "Contra Arianos". For this purpose it will be necessary to quote the entire parallel extracts together. De Decretis 28-31 on the left and C.Ar.I:30-34 on the right. As for the technique of quotation, both passages are complete and completely consecutive, and the occurrence of a space means that there is nothing corresponding to the material being handled in the other extract.

De Decretis

(55) "This in fact is the reason when the unsound nature of their phrases had been exposed at that time, and they were henceforth open to the charge of irreligion ( $\omega\varsigma \lambda\omicron\gamma\beta\omega\nu$ ), that they proceeded to borrow from the Greeks the term  $\tau\omicron\upsilon \lambda\gamma\epsilon\nu\eta\tau\omicron\upsilon$ , that, under shelter of it, they may reckon among the things originate and the creatures that Logos of God, through Whom these very things came to be; so unblushing are they in their irreligion, so obstinate in their

C. Arianos I  
(56)

"These considerations encourage the faithful, and distress the heretical, perceiving, as they do, their heresy overthrown thereby. Moreover, their further question, 'whether the Unoriginate be one or two', shows how false their views are, how treacherous and full of guile. Not for the Father's honour do they ask this, but for the dishonour of the Logos. Accordingly, should anyone, not aware of their craft, answer 'The Unoriginate is one', forthwith they spit out

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(55) Ch.28 of "De Decretis" follows an account of the Council of Nicaea, a justification of the Homousion, and a citation of Origen, Theognostus, and the Dionysii in support of the Nicene position.

(56) The previous chapters of C.Ar.I are a systematic refutation of Arianism.



blasphemies against the Lord. If then their want of shame arises from ignorance of the term, they ought to have learned of those who gave it to them, and who have not scrupled to say that even intellect ( $\nu\omicron\nu\varsigma$ ), which they say is from the Good, and the soul ( $\psi\chi\eta$ ) which is from the intellect, though their respective origins be known, are nevertheless Unoriginate, ( $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\eta\tau\alpha$  - here as always) <sup>(56)</sup>, for they understand that by so saying they do not disparage the first Origin from which the others come. This being the case, let them say the like themselves, or else not speak at all of what they do not know.

But if they consider that they are acquainted with the subject, then they must be interrogated; for the expression is not from divine Scripture, but they are contentious, as elsewhere, for un-Scriptural positions. Just as I have related

their own venom, saying, 'Therefore the Son is among things originate, and well have we said, "He was not before his generation."' Thus they make all kinds of disturbance and confusion, if only they can separate the Son from the Father, and reckon the Framer of all among His works.

Now first they may be convicted on this score, that, while blaming the Nicene Bishops for their use of phrases not in Scripture, even though they are not injurious but subversive of their irreligion ( $\lambda\omicron\epsilon\beta\epsilon\iota\alpha\varsigma$ ), they let themselves

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(56) Here, following both Migne and Opitz, we accept the spelling with one  $\nu$  throughout.

the reason why, and the sense with which the Council and the Fathers before it defined and published the  $\epsilon\kappa\ \eta\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\iota\varsigma$  and the Homousion, agreeably to what the Scripture says about the Saviour, so now let them, if they can, answer on their part what has led them to this un-Scriptural phrase, and in what sense they call God Unoriginate.

In truth, I am told, that the term has different senses; philosophers say that it means, first, 'what is not yet, but may, come to be;' next, 'what neither exists, nor can come to be;' and thirdly, 'what exists indeed, but neither was originated nor had origin of being, but is everlasting and indestructible.' Now, perhaps they will wish to pass over the first two senses, from the absurdity which follows; for according to the first sense, things that are already  
(58)  
coming to be, and things that are

fall under the same charge by using words not in Scripture, and those in contumely of the Lord, knowing 'neither what they say nor whereof they affirm'. For instance, let them ask the Greeks (for it is a word of their invention, not Scripture), and when they have been instructed in its various significations, they will then discover that they cannot even carry out a proper inquiry into the subject about which they speak.

For they have led me to ascertain that by 'unoriginate' is meant what has not yet come to be, but can possibly be, as wood that has not yet become a ship but can become one; and again what neither has, nor ever can, come to be, like a quadrangular triangle or an odd even number. For a triangle neither has become nor can ever become quadrangular, nor has the even ever become, nor can it become odd. Moreover, by 'unoriginate' is meant, what exists, but has not come into being from anything, not



expected to come to be are having a father at all. Further, unoriginate, and the second is more absurd still; accordingly they will proceed to the third sense, and use the term in it; though here, in this sense too, they are no less impious ( $\lambda\alpha\beta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ ). For if by Unoriginate they mean what has no origin of being, nor is originated or created, but eternal, and say that the Logos of God is contrary to this, who comprehends not the craftiness of these foes of God - Who but would stone these madmen - For, when they are ashamed to bring forward again those first phrases which they fabled and which were condemned, the wretches have taken another way to signify them, by means of what they call Unoriginate. For is the Son be of things originate, it follows that He too came to be  $\epsilon\lambda\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\kappa\alpha\iota\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\upsilon$ , and if He has an origin of being, then he was not before His generation ( $\alpha\upsilon\kappa\ \eta\upsilon\ \pi\alpha\rho\iota\upsilon\ \gamma\epsilon\mu\eta\theta\eta$ ), and if He is not eternal, there was once when He was not ( $\eta\upsilon\ \pi\omicron\tau\epsilon\ \delta\tau\epsilon\ \alpha\upsilon\kappa\ \eta\upsilon$ ) <sup>(59)</sup>.

(59) These are, of course, the regular stock phrases of Arianism that were formally condemned in the Nicene anathemas. This section corresponds to C. A. I: 32, Encl.

**Text cut off in original**



Asterius the unprincipled sophist, the patron too of this heresy, has added in his own treatise, that what is not made, but is ever, is 'unoriginate'. They ought then, when they ask this question, to add the sense in which they take the term Unoriginate, and then the parties concerned will be able to answer the point (60) .

29 If these are their sentiments they ought to signify the heterodoxy in their own phrases and not to hide their own perversity under the cloak of the unoriginate. But instead of this the evil-minded men do all things with craftiness, like their father, the Devil; for as he attempts to deceive in the guise of others, so these have broached the term Unoriginate, that they might pretend to speak piously (of God), yet might cherish a concealed blasphemy against the Lord, and under a veil might teach it to others. However, on the detection of this

31 But if they are still satisfied with asking, 'Is the Unoriginate one or two?' they must be told first of all, as ill-educated men, that many are such and nothing is such; many, which are capable of origination, and nothing, which is not capable, as has been said.

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(60) This corresponds to the most significant deficiency in the "De Decretis"; there are only a couple of sentences at De Decr. 29:C-D.

sophism, what remains to them?

'We have found another', say the evil-doers, and then proceed to add to what they have said already, that Unoriginate means what has no author of being, but stands itself in this relation to things originate<sup>(61)</sup>.

But if they ask accordingly to what Asterius ruled it, as if 'what is not a work but was always' were unoriginate, then they must constantly be told that the Son as well as the Father must in this sense be called Unoriginate. For He is neither among things originate, nor a thing made, but was ever with the Father, as has already been shown, in spite of their many variations for the sole purpose of speaking against the Lord, "He is ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων and οὐκ ἦν πρὶν γεννηθῆναι. When then, after failing at every turn, they betake themselves to the other sense of the question, 'exist

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(61) τὸ μὴ ἔχειν τοῦ εἶναι τὴν αἰτίαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς γεννητοῖς αὐτὸν αἰτίον εἶς τὸ γενέσθαι τυγχάνοντα. The last sentence is all that corresponds to the latter third of C.Ar.I:30.



but not generated ( $\chi\epsilon\nu\nu\eta\theta\epsilon\nu$ ) of anything nor having a father,' we shall tell them that the Unoriginate in this sense is only one, namely the Father; and they (62) will gain nothing by their question.

Unthankful, and in truth deaf to the Scriptures! who do everything, and say everything, not to honour God, but to dishonour the Son, ignorant that he who dishonours the Son, dishonours the Father. For first, even though they denote God in this way, still the Logos is not proved to be of things originate. For again, as Offspring of the Essence of the Father, He is consequently with Him eternally.

For to say that God is in this sense Unoriginate, does not show that the Son is a thing originate ( $\chi\epsilon\nu\eta\tau\omicron\nu$ ), it being evident from the above proofs that the Logos is such as is He Who begat Him. Therefore, if God be unoriginate, His Image is not originate, but an Offspring, which is His Logos and Wisdom. For what likeness has the originate with the unoriginate? (One must not be weary of using repetition), for if they have it that the one is like the other, so that he who sees the one beholds the other, they are liable to say that the Unoriginate is the image of creatures; the end of which is a confusion of the whole subject, an co-ordination of things

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(62) Nothing in the "De Decretis" corresponds to this section.

originate with the Unoriginate,  
and a denial of the Unoriginate  
by measuring Him with the works;  
and all so as to reduce the Son  
to their number.

32 However, I suppose that even  
they will be unwilling to proceed  
to such lengths, if they follow  
Asterius the Sophist. For he,  
earnest as he is in his advocacy  
of the Arian heresy, and  
maintaining that the Unoriginate  
is one, runs counter to them in  
saying that the Wisdom of God is  
unoriginate and without beginning  
(ἀναρχον) also. . . . (Here follows  
his exegesis of I Cor. 1:24, which  
we shall quote in full later;  
Athenasius's comments are so  
closely duplicated later in Orat.  
II:38, that we shall leave the  
passage aside (63) . . . . If then  
they agree with Asterius, let them  
never ask again, 'Is the Unoriginate  
one or two?' or they will have to

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(63) Athanasius maintains that  
Asterius virtually duplicated the  
Unoriginate. See below p. 851-56



contest the point with him; if, on the other hand, they differ even from him, let them not rely upon his treatise, but, 'biting one another, let them be consumed one of another' (Gal. 5:15) <sup>(64)</sup>.

So much on the point of their ignorance; but who can say enough on their craftiness? Who but would justly hate them while possessed of such a madness? For when they were no longer allowed to say ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων and οὐκ ἦν πρὶν γεννηθῆναι, they hit upon the word Unoriginate, that, by saying among the simple that the Son was Originate, they might imply the very same phrases ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων and ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν; for in such phrases things originate and creatures are implied.

33 If they have confidence in their own positions, they should stand to them and not change them about so variously; but this they

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(64) There is no equivalent in the section in "De Decretis" of this section on Asterius's doctrine.

will not, on the idea that they can readily succeed in anything, if they but shelter their heresy under cover of the 'Unoriginate' (65)

For the name of Offspring does not detract from the nature of the Logos, nor does the Unoriginate take its sense from contrast with the Son, but with the things that come to be through the Son; and as he who addresses an architect, and calls him framer of a house or city, does not under this designation allude to the son who is begotten from him, but calls him artificer on account of the art and science (τέχνην καὶ ἐπιστήμην) directed to his works, signifying thereby that he is not the same sort of thing as the things made by him; and, in knowing the nature of the maker, knows also that he who is begotten from him is different from his works. And it is on account of his son that

Yet after all the term is not used in contrast with the Son, clamour as they may, but with things originate; and the like may be found in the terms 'Almighty' and 'Lord of the Powers'. For if we say that the Father has power and mastery over all things through the Logos, and the Son rules the Father's kingdom, and has power over all, as the Father's Logos, and as the Image of the Father, it is quite plain that here the Son is not reckoned among the 'everything', nor is God called Almighty and Lord on account of Him, but on account of those things which through the Son came to be, and over which He exercises power and mastery through the Logos. And therefore the

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(65) Corresponds to De Deor. 28 end.



he calls him father; and on account of his works, creator and maker; in like manner he who says in this sense that God is Unoriginate, names Him from His works, signifying not only that He is not originate, but that He is Maker of the things which are so; yet is aware withal that the Logos is other than things originate, and alone is a proper Offspring of the Father (ἰδίον τοῦ Πατρὸς γέννημα), through Whom all things came to be and consist.

30 In like manner, when the Prophets spoke of God as All-ruling, they did not so name Him as if the Logos were included in that All; (for they know that the Son was other than things originate, and Sovereign over them Himself, according to His likeness to the Father); but because He is Ruler over all things which through the Son He has made, and has given the authority over all things to the Son, and having given it, is Himself once more the Lord of all things through the Logos. Again when

Unoriginate is specified, not in contrast to the Son but in contrast to the things which came to be through the Son. And excellently, since God is not as things originate, but is their Creator and Framers through the Son. And as the word 'Unoriginate' is specified relatively to things originate, so the word 'Father' is indicative of the Son. And he who names God Maker and Framers and Unoriginate, regards and apprehends things created and made; and he who calls God Father, thereby conceives and contemplates the Son, And hence one might marvel at the obstinacy which is added to their irreligion, that whereas the term Unoriginate has the aforesaid good sense, and admits of being used religiously (μετ' εὐσεβείας), they, in their own heresy, bring it forward for the dishonour of the Son, not having read that he who honoureth the Son honoureth the Father, and he who dishonoureth the Son dishonoureth the Father.

that called God, 'Lord of the Powers',  
 they said this not as if the Logos  
 were one of those powers, but because,  
 while He is Father of the Son, He is  
 Lord of the powers which through the  
 Son have come to be. For again, the  
 Logos too, as being in the Father, is  
 Lord over them all, and Sovereign over  
 all; for all things whatsoever the  
 Father hath, are the Son's. This then  
 being the force of such titles, in like  
 manner let a man call God Unoriginate,  
 if it so please him; not however as if  
 the Logos were among things originate,  
 but because, as I have said before God  
 not only is not originate, but through  
 His proper Logos He is the Maker of  
 things which are so. For though the  
 Father be called such, still the Logos  
 is the Father's Image, and one in  
 essence (*ὁμοούσιος*) with Him; and being  
 His Image, He must be distinct from  
 things originate, and from everything;  
 for He hath the property and likeness  
 of Him Whose Image He is, so that He  
 Who calls the Father Unoriginate and  
 Almighty, perceives in the Unoriginate  
 and Almighty, His Logos and His Wisdom



which is the Son. But these wondrous men, prompt for irreligion, hit upon the term Unoriginate, not as caring for God's honour, but from malevolence towards the Saviour;

At this stage, the texts of the two works become almost identical with the exception of the minor alterations that Stülcken has cited, and which we have noted above. The passage concerned is De Deer.30:472D-31:473C, which is followed by a further sentence which brings in the Spirit; corresponding to C.Ar.I:33:80C-34, except the last sentence, which has peroratory function only. We shall cite from the latter, since it is the longer text: "If they have any concern at all for reverent speaking

and the honour due to the Father, it would become them rather, and this would be better and higher, to acknowledge and call God Father, than to give Him this name. For in calling God Unoriginate, they are, as I said before, calling Him from His works, and as Maker only and Framer, supposing that hence they may signify that the Logos is a work after their own pleasure. But he who calls God Father, signifies Him from the Son, being well aware that if there be a Son, of necessity all things originate were created through that Son. And they, when they call Him Unoriginate, name Him only from His works, and know not the Son any more than the Greeks, but he who calls God Father, names Him from the Logos; and knowing the Logos, he understands Him to be Framer of all, and understands that through Him all things have been made.

De Deer.31            Therefore, it is more pious and more accurate to signify  
C.Ar.I:34            God from the Son and call Him Father, than to name Him from  
the works only and call Him Unoriginate. For the latter title, as

I have said, does nothing more than signify all the works, individually and collectively, which have come to be at the will of God through the Logos; but the title Father has its significance and bearing only from the Son. And, whereas the Logos surpasses things originate, by so much and more doth calling God Father surpass calling Him Unoriginate. For the latter is un-Scriptural and suspicious, because it has various senses; so that, when a man is asked concerning it, his mind is carried about to many ideas; but the term Father is simple and Scriptural, and more accurate, and only implies the Son. And 'Unoriginate' is a term of the Greeks, who know not the Son; but 'Father' has been acknowledged and vouchsafed by Our Lord. For He, knowing Himself Whose Son He was, said, 'I am in the Father and the Father is in Me', and, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father', and 'I and the Father are one', but nowhere is He found to call the Father Unoriginate. Moreover, when He teaches us to pray, He says not, 'When ye pray, say "God Unoriginate"' but rather 'When ye pray, say "Our Father, which art in Heaven"'.

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And it was His will that the Summary of our faith should have the same bearing, in bidding us to be baptized, not into the name of Unoriginate and Originate, nor into the name of Creator and Creature, but into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. For with such an initiation we too, being numbered among works, are made sons, and using the name of Father, acknowledge from that name the Logos also in the Father Himself." In De Deor. 31, there are then a few sentences which indicate, for the first time, that in spite of being adopted sons, there still remains all the difference

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(66) Nominative, as in Opitz, De Deor., as distinct from Migne's vocative.



possible between the Son by nature and us as sons by adoption, and, most significant of all, Athanasius points out, quoting Gal.4:6, that it is the Holy Spirit that enables us to own God as our Father. These sentences are omitted from C.Ar.I:34 probably because Athanasius was about to treat the whole subject (and in fact did, C.Ar.III:10-25) in a far more exhaustive and definitive fashion later.

The rough general examination that should always precede any detailed study indicates that, even though the text in the final, common section is shorter in "De Decretis", in general, it is the "Contra Arianos" that is the terser account, and that its greater length is due to its insertion of new matter and its greater concentration on certain arguments. The clearest case of the former is an extended study of the question of the Wisdom of God, especially with regard to the doctrine of Asterius, whom Athanasius feels to have succeeded in pulling his own doctrine apart. The whole "Two Wisdoms" issue will have to be discussed later <sup>(67)</sup>, but Hoss <sup>(68)</sup> is quite right to point out, as against Stülcken, that Athanasius, once having noticed that Asterius had after all virtually talked about two unoriginate, would hardly have failed to mention this self-refutation of Arianism in the later writing. There is no point in Stülcken and Gummerus <sup>(69)</sup> trying to maintain that Asterius had lost his notoriety by about 351-356; Athanasius's treatment of him in "De Synodis" <sup>(70)</sup> is proof that he was still a scandal in 359. An obvious instance of the latter is the far greater emphasis in C.Ar.I:30-34 on the argument that if God Himself, that is, the Father, is unoriginate or ultimate, so

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(67) See below, pp.851-6.

(68) "Studien" p.51.

(69) "Die homöusianische Partei, . . ." pp.185-196.

(70) For a full discussion, see above, p.263-4.

must His Image, that is, the Son, be; therefore, the real result in the long run of Arian theology is not unitarianism, that is, the denial of the Father in the sense of denial of the Father's Paternity, but the denial of the Father in the sense of the denial of the Father's Deity, that is, atheism in the strictest and most modern sense; on the other hand, this argument, though less pervasive than in C.Ar.I:30-34, is given full weight in De Decr.30. On the other hand, the sections of De Decr. 28-31 to which there is nothing fully corresponding in C.Ar.30-34 are the introductory sections of ch.28 and the illustration of the paterfamilias who is a builder in ch.29. The former may be a rhetorical exaggeration, but if it has any relation to the truth at all, it means that the argument on the *ἀρχηγρον* came into prominence only after the decisions of Nicaea had made the earlier blatant proclamation of Arian principles canonically illegal. The important point here is that Athanasius remembers when this argument took the place of the others, not as the only argument or even in a sense the supreme argument, but as the Arians' most conspicuous one. The fact that at the beginning of C.Ar.I:30 there is no corresponding section and that this argument is introduced naturally as it is now completely domiciled in Arianism, is as good an indication of the later date of the "Contra Arianos I-III" as anything ever cited to the contrary. The absence from C.Ar.I:30-34 of the illustration of the builder is neither here nor there, since Athanasius has just been covering almost the same ground in C.Ar.I:26 ff.

A general examination also confirms that the general argumentation of the extracts from C.Ar.I is more mature than in the "De Decretis". It is quite beside the point for Gummerus to maintain that the polemic is sharper in the latter-mentioned work <sup>(71)</sup>; it would be much more accurate to say that the polemic was blunter, in the sense in which the

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(71) "Die homöusianische Partei . . ." pp. 185-98.



author, in his medical days, remembers the professor in charge of the dissecting room telling the class that it is the blunt scalpel that cuts everywhere whereas the sharp scalpel cuts exactly where its user wants it to cut, no more, and no less. In "De Decretis", Athanasius is certainly more abusive ad homines, but there is no doubt that the polemic in the "Contra Arianos" shows far more precision in the intellectual sense, and perhaps even in the polemical sense too. This is actually another argument for the late dating of the "Contra Arianos" I-III.

Now that we have dealt with these introductory points, it is necessary to analyse in full the formal character of the argument of these sections and especially of the sort of reply that is necessary to meet the case of the Arians, and perhaps above all of such doubters as Eusebius of Caesarea as he was when he wrote to Euphrasion (72). It must be explained at once that we have followed Robertson's emendation of Newman's translation in translating ἀχένητον and γενητόν by words derived from "origin" rather than from "generation", since the accepted text invariably has one V although certain MSS have two (for details see Migne and Opitz). We have additionally corrected Robertson by substituting uniformly the gerundival forms "unoriginate" and "originate" respectively where Robertson, not quite accurately, uses the passive participial forms "unoriginated", "originated", since the Greek terms are properly gerundival. When this has been properly understood, it can be seen that the best translation of what the Greeks meant by τὸ ἀχένητον is "The Ultimate" in certain senses, including the most important metaphysical sense. Thus, the difficulties that arose in connection with

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(72) Cited above, p. 263.

the Unoriginate in theology do concern, in the last analysis, the rational idea that there cannot be more than one ultimate and its relation to Biblical monotheism. But in its concrete manifestation, the issue concerned another category altogether, that is, causality; we should expect, under the circumstances, that it would be causality in the sort of ultimate sense in which it is found in natural theology, but in fact the issues of the controversy are best illuminated by a study of this category in its ordinary sense. Now, causality, and the word *αἰτία*, cause, is a concept which neither Athanasius nor Asterius had any hesitation in applying to the Godhead <sup>(73)</sup>. On the other hand there is a certain prejudice in modern theology against speaking in this way, and apparently not only because to speak of God as the cause of our goodness and the grace in us appears to deny the role of human freedom. The most serious difficulties are formal and categorial. It happens that a study of these difficulties is the best way of illuminating the point that Athanasius had to make against Asterius and the other Arians. This study will be in a sense rather modern, but it will be by no means anachronistic, since it will be essentially based on Aristotelian logic and incidental developments later on its basis. The modern difficulty with causality began when Hume pointed out that we cannot really observe cause in action in the older modern sense of sheer power, and that the only things that we can really observe are the conjunction - or the constant conjunction, which was sufficient justification for his scepticism - of cause and effect, and the temporal priority of cause compared with effect <sup>(74)</sup>. The only way out of this

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(73) See eg. De Inc. 4 beginning, where the *αἰτία* of the Atonement (a fortiori) is the sin of man.

(74) Treatise, Book I, Part III.



conundrum is to follow Hume in essence, but to apply two further principles, which express the element of universality or generality that Hume found it impossible to accept. Firstly, a cause can only be accepted as a cause if it is a particular case of a general causal law. This is in fact identical with the experimental principle in modern science (75). Otherwise, how do we know that, for example, the War of 1914-18 was not caused by some other entirely disconnected thing, and that the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand had nothing to do with it, appearances to the contrary being an artefact of a Cartesian

(75) It is hardly ever understood that not only is modern scientific method as a whole best represented in terms of traditional logic, but that this is really the only possible representation of it. The very point of the experimental method is that the entities with which science deals are those which are, to parody Aquinas's classical statement about God, "in genere aliquo", and therefore are logically subject to propositional treatment. This is necessarily one of the basic postulates of science; otherwise the Humean sceptical principle would bring it to a full stop far more effectively than religion. The postulate which scientists add to enable them to start investigation is, in fact, the uniformity of nature - which Hume actually postulated in order to refute miracles ("Inquiry concerning Human Understanding" Sect. X), but nowhere else. Propositionally, this would be, either  $X \supset Y$  or  $X \equiv Y$ . But in a number of instances (one would be enough if nature were absolutely uniform), things are seen experimentally to be both  $X$  and  $Y$ . Therefore, by A A I Fig. 3 syllogism,  $X \supset Y$ . Therefore,  $X \equiv Y$  is false, being the contradictory of  $X \supset Y$ . Therefore  $X \supset Y$  is true, Q.E.D. This exposition also gives the best account of the basic uncertainty of scientific knowledge. This, which is often attributed in modern philosophy to logical difficulties in a positivist principle of verification - which is true enough on its own terms - is actually better regarded as simply the uncertainty in the postulate of the uniformity of nature, and whether it applies in this instance in the way postulated. Hence the popularity of statistical principle and analysis. But after all it would stop scientific progress and investigation completely if scientists were satisfied with a statement that a law was true in 80 per cent., or even 99.99 per cent. of cases. Progress consists in investigating further why the law is not true in the remaining cases; that is, in a progress towards a supra-statistical knowledge, no matter how unattainable in practice.

This shows clearly the real complaint of science in its strictest sense against religion. God, as Aquinas said, "non est in genere aliquo". Whatever the contemporary complications inherent in, for example, the revival of monistic and often rationalistic cosmology and even cosmogony, it is in the main as simple as that.



malignant demon? The other is that this constant conjunction must apply negatively as well as positively; that is, that absence of the cause is regularly associated with absence of the effect. Again, this is identical with the other great principle of modern scientific method, the principle of the control group as a necessary part of every experiment. Thus the causal law is as follows in propositional form:  $XC \supset Y$ ,  $X \text{ non-}C \supset \text{non-}Y$ , where  $X$  is the field in which the law applies,  $C$  is the cause, which is usually a relation to another interacting body, and  $Y$  is the effect, and by the application of A A A Fig.1 syllogisms to both the positive and negative halves of the causal law, the particular instance can be seen to be truly caused by the cause concerned. In the above propositional analysis,  $X$  is the field,  $C$  the efficient cause, and  $Y$  is the effect. In terms of the traditional differentiation of causes, the material cause is actually the field, the formal cause is simply the middle term of an AAA Fig.1 syllogism which may, or may not, be related to a causal law as here defined, and the final cause is actually the effect, with the additional feature that the effect was demanded by a personal agency.

One thing is lacking in this analysis; it is symmetrical as between cause and effect, since, within the field  $X$ , both propositions of the causal law can be obverted and contraposed so that the cause becomes the effect and the effect the cause. Thus, to give a complete account of causality, it is necessary to invoke the other principle of Hume, the fact that the cause always temporally precedes the effect - and, for that matter, the field precedes both. It is this temporal priority that was the real issue in the question of the *ἀρχή* *ἡ* *τοῦ*.

This study makes obvious the difficulties of the notion of causality as applied in any way to God. Not only the effect but also the cause and



the field must be "in genere aliquo". On the other hand, there is a real analogical sense in which the category of causality can apply to God. In fact, in this sense, causality applies supremely to God. We instinctively feel that, in spite of Hume and the logical structure built on him, there is something more to causality than the sort of extended principle of constant conjunction that we have postulated as the only possible analysis that can be given. It is in this sense that causality not only applies to God, but applies supremely to God. It is human causality, not God's, that is always breaking down to something less than it, and which can only be described, in terms of lower concepts <sup>(76)</sup>. With these provisions, causality can be really applied to God, and there is no doubt that Athanasius and other theologians saw it in this way.

This leaves the question of temporal priority, and this was the problem that really caused the trouble. The difficulty was to see how, if the Son had his origin in the Father, they could be both co-eternal. Now this is a real difficulty, and until it is solved no progress can be made. The only thing to do is to simply affirm that in God this difficulty does not apply, since no category can be said to apply to God in the same way as among creatures. That is, it is necessary to divide the elements of origin and temporal or quasi-temporal priority, which are inseparable in the creaturely sphere, and say that although, the Son has, in a genuine and theologically significant way, His origin in the Father, not to say cause, so that the Father is Unoriginate even with respect to the Son, in the quasi-<sup>Causal</sup>temporal sense, the Father and Son

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(76) As we shall see below (pp. 686-96), this was the supreme and final doctrine of analogy in Athanasius, which he develops with special reference to the Paternity of the Father, C.Ar.I:20-22, and the Unity of God C.Ar.III:10-25.

are both co-eternal, and thus in that sense both equally co-unoriginate. Only when this is out of the way would one be justified in going on to say that this is, after all, not the best way of describing God, in this sort of metaphysical term, and that this is the reason why its difficulties have loomed so portentously. This is the second, final, and culminating point that Athanasius makes, that Unoriginate is after all a term that has its correlative opposite in the field of creaturely reality, as generally understood by the Greeks, and that even after the confusion described above has been cleared, it still remains a dangerous term to use for that very reason <sup>(77)</sup>. This is actually one of the most significant passages in all theology, which constitutes an advance warning against all theology of correlationism, that is, of God and the world, and one which, of modern writers, Paul Tillich in particular would do well to heed. Athanasius, in De Decr. 31 = C.Ar. I:34, expresses this point so perfectly and so lucidly that any attempt to paraphrase it would be an insult. There are only two things that can conceivably be added. The first is that the theology that is based on a correlation of God with the cosmos received its final death blow from Feuerbach <sup>(78)</sup>, and how any one can revive it passes the author's comprehension. Secondly, the fact that Athanasius was so pungently aware of this issue suggests that he felt instinctively that here was one of the roots of Arianism, and that the whole theology of correlation had to be extirpated. Henceforth, all the terms for God had to be those which had their correlates only within

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(77) But this does not, pace Gunnerus, "Die homöusianische Partei . . ." p. 189, indicate that it was the supreme argument in the sense of being the only argument that counts. If Hoss, "Studien . . ." had, as cited by Gunnerus, ever made such an admission against his own case, he should not have done so.

(78) See classically, "Wesen des Christentums", E.T. "What is Christianity", passim. This subject is fully discussed later, pp. 449, and Appx. pp.



God Himself, that is, supremely, Father and Son, and the realisation of this is a great step in the development of Trinitarian theology.

But this does not alter the fact that, in a sense, the way is not clear for this final argument until the former argument is settled. Now, the former argument is completely absent in De Decr.28-31. In fact, Athanasius had not yet even noticed, except in a very hazy way, the distinction in the Arian argument and the exact way in which it was used to deceive others. This, to the author, is incontrovertible (79) evidence that the "Contra Arianos" is later than the "De Decretis". The final confirmation is that when Athanasius, for the third time, and at less length, returns to treat the matter, in De Syn.46-47, the differences from De Decr.28-31 that are evident in C.Ar.I:30-34, are again in evidence, only more so. Here, the two first meanings of the ἀγέννητον are not mentioned, since they are irrelevant anyway, and the whole passage concerns the third and the fourth: (46:776A)(Athanasius is bringing up the ἀγέννητον as another illustration, in the context of the Homocousion, of the correct use of a non-Scriptural term): "As for (80) the word 'Unoriginate' (81), we have not derived this word from

(79) Roman Catholic scholarship always recognises this; see Newman's notes to all relevant passages, and also Stegmann, "Zur Datierung . . .", p.439.

(80) See Newman's note on this passage and the one substituted by Robertson, which, as distinct from Newman, accepts the assumption that there is a real distinction between ἀγέννητον, unoriginate, and ἀγεννητον, ingenerate, and the corresponding positives. The MSS evidence is very confused (see Migne and Opitz), but both these authorities accept the latter in all instances in ch.46 and the former in all instances in ch.47, including the quotations from Ignatius and the other unknown authority. What makes confusion worse is that both Lightfoot, "Ignatius of Antioch", in "Apostolic Fathers", II, Sect.I, pp.90-94, and Zahn, Patr. Apost. II, p.338, affirm that the true reading of the celebrated extract from Ign. Eph. 7, quoted in ch.47, is ἀγεννητος, etc., and that as there is obviously one meaning intended in these chapters from "De Synodis" it is the same reading. On the other hand, Robertson, in spite of his general support of Lightfoot, cannot but maintain that Athanasius, however, mistaken, read Ignatius as saying ἀγέννητος, and that this must be



Scripture (for nowhere does Scripture call God Unoriginate), yet, since it has many authorities in its favour, I was curious about the term, and found that it too has different senses. Some, for instance, call what is but is neither generated, nor has any personal cause at all <sup>(82)</sup>, unoriginate, and others, the uncreate <sup>(83)</sup>. As then, a person having in view the former of these senses, viz., 'that which has no personal cause', might say that the Son was not unoriginate, yet would not blame anyone whom he perceived to have in view the other meaning, 'not a work or a creature but an eternal offspring,' and to affirm accordingly that the Son was unoriginate . . . (let us take the same attitude to the Homousion) . . . (Ch.47, beg.) Ignatius, for instance, who was appointed Bishop in Antioch after the Apostles, and became a martyr of Christ, writes concerning the Lord thus, 'There is one Physician, originate, and unoriginate, God in man, true life in death, both from Mary and from God;' <sup>(84)</sup> whereas some teachers who follow Ignatius, write in their turn, 'One is the Unoriginate, the Father, and one the genuine Son from Him, true Offspring, Logos and Wisdom of the Father' <sup>(85)</sup>. If therefore we have hostile feelings towards these writers, then we have a right to quarrel with the Councils (so.-author-Antioch in

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accepted as the reading, since the argument is an exact duplicate of the important part of the argument in C.Ar.I:30 ff., and that the distinction that Athanasius not only makes himself, but also attributes to Ignatius, that Christ is originate-or-generate according to the flesh, but unoriginate-or-ingenerate according to His deity, while not being exactly his own mature argument as in C.Ar.I:31 and De Syn.48, is still meaningless on the reading ἀγεννητός or γεννητός, that is, if a distinction was made.

(81) Reading, with Opitz, τοῦ before μεγαθήκαμεν (not in Migne).

(82) τὸ ὄν, μὴτε δὲ γεννηθέν, μὴτε ὅλως ἔχον τὸν αἰτίον.

(83) τὸ ἀκτιστόν.

(84) From Ign. Eph.7, and see above, fn.80.

(85) Unknown; Robertson cites from Cl.Alex. Strom.VI:7.



269 and Nicaea in 325), but if, knowing their faith in Christ, we are persuaded that the blessed Ignatius was right in writing that Christ was originate after the flesh (for He became flesh), yet unoriginate, because He is not of things made or originate, but Son from the Father; and if we are aware too that those who have said that the Unoriginate is one, meaning the Father, did not mean to lay down that the Logos was originate and made, but that the Father has no personal cause, but rather is Himself Father of Wisdom, and in Wisdom has made all things originate . . . (let us adopt the same methods in evaluating Antioch and Nicaea on the Homocousion . . .)

However uncertain Athanasius might be - with good reason - in his handling of the citation from Ignatius, it is evident that the brief exposition in ch.46 is the clearest exposition possible of the two meanings of the *ἀγέννητον* that gave rise to the confusion, even clearer than C.Ar.I:30-31, and Newman is right in regarding these three extracts as forming an ascending series in clarity, beginning with De Decr.28-29, which is evidently the earliest. Athanasius always knew the importance of refuting the correlation between the Logos and the world, but it was apparently only at a somewhat later stage that he saw, with sufficient clarity, what was the real mental block that enabled the Arians to trap their innocent brethren in heresy. It is noteworthy that Athanasius, in treating this matter, is quite temperate, as if he knew that it was a serious problem even to the most faithful Christian theologian, and one to which not enough attention had been given in the past. Perhaps, one thing that helped him to understand the matter is the greater development and clarity of Athanasius's whole doctrine of theological analogy in the "Contre Ariens", compared with any other work before - or, it is fair to add, since



To return, at last, to Stülcken's last argument, which we have  
 (87)  
 cited above, our analysis of the argument shows that there is a  
 valid reason for making the substitution in question, that is, that  
 Athanasius is just about to clinch the argument against correlation  
 between the Logos and the world, maintaining that all correlations  
 must be between the Persons of the Godhead. When this is remembered,  
 it will be seen that the interpretation of Stülcken is really cogent  
 only if one accepts in advance the Loofs hypothesis that Athanasius  
 had a gradual and continuous transition between not caring for the  
 Homousion in his earlier years and enthusiastic acceptance in the  
 late 340s and afterwards, so that to that extent the argument is  
 circular.

This concludes our detailed investigation of the relation between  
 (88)  
 De Decr.28-31 and C.Ar.30-34, and the evidence, although not quite

(87) See ~~below~~ p#283

(88) On the strength of these accounts of the  $\lambda\chi\epsilon\nu\eta\tau\omicron\nu$ , etc., the  
 author is hereby taking the very serious step of rejecting en bloc the  
 entire very considerable corpus of literature, mainly Protestant,  
 including Anglican, which flows from Lightfoot's excursus on this term,  
 Apost. Paths. II, Sect. I, p.90-94 (Ignatius), which is based on an attempt  
 to differentiate clearly between either  $\chi\epsilon\nu\eta\tau\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\chi\epsilon\nu\eta\tau\omicron\varsigma$ , or  
 $\lambda\chi\omega\eta\tau\omicron\varsigma$  and  $\lambda\chi\epsilon\nu\eta\tau\omicron\varsigma$ . After all, in what was his definitive treat-  
 ment of the issue, and intended to be such, Athanasius did not try to  
 make such a distinction at all, let alone base Trinitarian theology on it.  
 The only issue was origination,  $\chi\epsilon\nu\epsilon\omicron\iota\varsigma$ , in the widest possible sense,  
 and even the relation of Father and Son is discussed in this way. This  
 is the final confirmation of the original position of Newman (Select  
 Treatises of St. Athanasius in Controversy with the Arians, 1844 ed. note  
 on C.Ar. I:56; 1881 ed. note in Vol. II, 347-349), that the distinction  
 was not made at any stage of the Arian controversy; certainly not in  
 Athanasius. The MSS evidence, of which we have just noted a sample, has  
 a random character which is statistically almost useless. Admittedly,  
 Athanasius twice makes a similar differentiation: II:20:189A: "For ye  
 (sc. Arians) say that Offspring ( $\chi\epsilon\nu\eta\mu\epsilon\iota$ ) is the same<sup>as</sup> thing as-made  
 ( $\pi\omicron\iota\eta\mu\epsilon\iota$ ) saying,  $\chi\epsilon\nu\eta\theta\epsilon\nu\tau\alpha$   $\eta$   $\pi\omicron\iota\eta\theta\epsilon\nu\tau\alpha$ . I:56:129B: "The  $\chi\epsilon\nu\eta\tau\alpha$   
 (things originate), cannot be called  $\chi\epsilon\nu\eta\tau\alpha$ , (things begotten), as they are  
 God's handiwork, except insofar as they subsequently partake  $\tau\omicron\upsilon$   $\chi\epsilon\nu\eta\tau\omicron\upsilon$   
 $\nu\iota\omega$ . In the first case, it is fair to note the difference in the words  
 used; in the second, although in a sense it is true that Athanasius is



uniform, is overwhelmingly in favour of the conclusion that the "Contra Arianos" I-III were written after "De Decretis". What is more important still, the evidence as a whole covers both the first and third Orations, and thus shows that all three were probably written after "De Decretis", and were thus virtually consecutive. There are only two other matters which claim any further attention. The first is the vexed question of the Homousion, or rather the reason for its absence in the "Contra Arianos" I-III. We have deliberately avoided discussion of this matter as much as possible in this context, as, if we try to use the order of writing of the various works of Athanasius as evidence for the development of his theology, it would be circular to use an arbitrary picture of the development of Athanasius's doctrine of the Homousion

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is here establishing the differentiation in question, in another sense is really well beyond even his own definitive treatment of the issue at this point, and is already deeply in his fresh examination of the Doctrine of Reconciliation, which, one might almost say, went beyond the Arian controversy itself. It is a tribute to Athanasius's theological realism perhaps, that he did not adopt this somewhat too easy solution to the problem in his definitive treatment, since it would still leave the minds of many uneasy on the issue of causality in the widest sense that we have discussed above.

The main reason for this difficulty is undoubtedly the very simple reason that auditory association meant much more than visual association in those days, especially in a controversy (see C.Ar.I:22, etc.) so much of which was conducted in the market place. Probably not until the days of the monastic copyists did the written word even begin to assume an importance even comparable with its importance today (Allowance must be made for this when we study, say, Irenaeus on Scripture and tradition). One may legitimately wonder, too, at the theological competence of the early copyists. Still, the whole question is the main sign of the most dangerous tendencies of the ante-Nicene tradition, a failure to make properly the distinction between becoming - almost in the sense of creation - and generation in the true, quasi-biological sense. The position that we are finally adopting is that the Arians, whatever the MSS readings in almost any given case, argued from origination and not generation, <sup>that</sup> wherever they might have genuinely used the vocabulary of the latter concept, they did it for obfuscatory purposes only, and that Athanasius in this regard fought them entirely on their own ground.

For examples of literature on this subject, see literature cited above in this note and in note 80 above, and also Prestige, "God in Patristic Thought", 36-54 and 151-156; "Journal of Theological Studies", XXIV:486 ff and XXXIV:258 ff., Zahn, "Marcellus von Ancyra, 40, 104, 223. Jules Lebreton S.J., "Histoire du Dogme de la Trinite . . ." (Fr. original): II:635-647 etc



as evidence for the chronological order of his writings. This is distinct from what has been done above on the *ἀχρόνως*, since we have only incidentally, and for the sake of completeness, elaborated Athanasius's doctrine; our criterion for chronology has been the formal clarity with which the issue has been presented. The best thing to do would be to lay aside the critical question of the absence of the Homoeousion in C.Ar.I-III to a later date, apart from making it quite clear that the reason, in view of the evidence to the contrary, must be something other than Loofs's hypothesis that Athanasius only became convinced of the importance of it after the putative date of writing the Orations in 338<sup>(89)</sup>. Another point that might well be made here is that the statement of Stülcken<sup>(90)</sup> that Athanasius did not mention the Homoeousion because it was not raised by the Arians about 338, is most suspect. It is inconceivable that the Homoeousion was ever far from the minds, or even the mouths, of the Arian party, even if at that stage, and right up to the "Blasphemy of Sirmium", 357 A.D., they were not ready to formulate a creed which specifically attacked it. After all, in the period about 338, Marcellus of Anoyra had made the Homoeousion suspect enough, and if, as the author accepts, the "De Sententia Dionisii" is best allocated to the period around 335, this is further evidence that the Arians attacked the Homoeousion at this date, and not merely before Nicaea and then in the 350s. Besides, there are the specific statements of Sozomen<sup>(91)</sup> and Soocrates<sup>(92)</sup> that the Homoeousion was always a point at issue. The other matter is raised by Opitz in his notes on De Decr.5, end. where Athanasius says, ". . . therefore, though in my former letter<sup>(93)</sup>

(89) P. R. E. (3rd ed.) Pt. II:17 f. and 200 f.

(90) Op. cit 48 f.

(91) Eccl. Hist. III:19.

(92) Eccl. Hist. I:23 and 38, II:2.

(93) διὰ τῆς προτέρας ἐπιστολῆς.



written to thee, I have already argued at length <sup>(94)</sup> against them . . ."  
Opitz suggests that this former letter may be C.Ar.I-III. But against this is the simple fact that, unlike the "De Decretis", the Orations are not, as regards literary form, letters to anybody, but - and this is the measure of truth behind their traditional Latin title - highly kerygmatic treatises written for men at large.

Thus, the position that we accept is that the Orations were written after the "De Decretis". What is the terminus ad quem? Traditional Catholic scholarship puts them about 358, after the Ep. ad Episc. Aeg. et Lib., and before the "De Synodis", and this finding is normally based on the MSS or other internal relation to the former book, <sup>(95)</sup> and, to a less extent, the Hist. Arianorum, written about 359. Is this really plausible? Are they really products of the Third Exile? Under modern conditions, and to a less extent under post-Renaissance conditions generally, it is not so difficult to write letters from a hiding place, or even to print, or transmit from a secret radio station, if one is prepared to tolerate an enormous decline in traditional standards of production, transmission, etc.; this is quite apart from the problem of avoiding detection. In Athanasius's days, there was probably much less margin of safety. In comparison, modern exiles like Lenin, Trotsky, and Otto Strasser have had access, in some measure to modern facilities in foreign countries, which were utterly denied to Athanasius. The solution to the problem depends on the extent to which literary facilities were available in the monasteries of Egypt, which were presumably the main hiding places of Athanasius. It is very

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(94) πλανυτέρῳ τῇ κατ' αὐτῶν ἐλέγχῳ κεχρωμένῳ.

(95) Stegmann "Zur Datierung . . ." accepts the traditional dating. This is the only respect in which the author disagrees with him.

misleading to think of this in terms of the mediaeval Western European situation, with a barbarous and illiterate population outside and the monasteries under the Benedictine rule. In the early days, things were different; even Antony was not literate in the sense required here, whatever his general competence. Although the very dispersion of the orthodox during this period of persecution would have itself partially corrected this deficiency, <sup>even so,</sup> ~~although~~ the sudden accumulation of large quantities of papyrus, a scarce commodity, against the Government in what has always been one of the most completely centralised countries in the world, would have been most difficult. In all probability, Athanasius would have found it more difficult to write during the exile than during his residence in Alexandria, with full access to the great literary and cultural facilities of what after all was the cultural capital of the Graeco-Roman world, even if allowance is made for his freedom(!) from other duties. There is a great deal of literature that undoubtedly dates from the Third Exile, the *Apologia De Fuga*, *Apologia ad Constantium*, *Epistola ad Episcopos Aegypti et Libyae*, *Historia Arianorum*, *De Synodis*, and *Epistolae ad Serapionem de Spiritu Sancto*. Much of it shows, in comparison with the Orations against the Arians, signs of composition during such a period of great stress, such as a certain (relative) lack of tidiness and asperity in polemic. It would be too much to add to all this the relatively leisurely and technically perfect Orations. We have already seen, by our study of the references to Constantius, that the latest possible date would be about a year after the beginning of the Third Exile. It is probable that the date can actually be brought down to the beginning of the Third Exile itself, February 8th, 356, and if the Orations are incomplete, Athanasius's forcible expulsion from Alexandria on that date suggests itself as the cause of their non-completion.



It is now necessary to examine the problem from the other side. On the evidence that we have accepted, the terminus a quo for the writing of "Contra Arianos" I-III is whatever is the latest of: the Council of Philippopolis (343) or the Macrosthich (345), the return of Athanasius in 346, or the writing of the De Decretis. As the evidence concerns all sections of the Contra Arianos I-III, we can say that all sections of these Orationes were written consecutively, without the intervention of such a work as the De Decretis. When was this work written? There is general agreement on this point. To quote Robertson (introd. to De Decretis, p.148): "This letter must have been written in the interval between the return of Athanasius in 346 and his flight in 356. Acacius was already (ch.3) Bishop of Caesarea (339): Eusebius of Nicomedia is not referred to as though still living (he died 342). Moreover the language of ch.2 (for in no long time they will return to outrage etc.) implies a period of actual peace, but with a prospect of the repetition of the scenes of the year 339. This actually occurred in 356. Accordingly, we must probably place the tract under the sole reign of Constantius between 351 and 356." This conclusion would make our previous conclusion about the date of Contra Arianos I-III a little difficult, but, fortunately, Robertson's conclusion can be modified. The fact that Athanasius says "in no long time (*μετ' ὀλίγον*) they will . . ." does not justify one in assuming that Athanasius was clairvoyant, and that 356 was in actual fact only a very few years away. Consider this statement: "The Germans are on the way back; in no long time they will try again to overthrow us." Any Briton or Frenchman who was as anti-German as Athanasius was anti-Arian would almost certainly make this sort

of statement from the moment that Hitler came to power in January, 1933, if not for many years before that—nearly seven years before the actual resumption of war in September, 1939. In the same way, the Third World War, from which God preserve us, has in a very real sense, been "imminent" for over twelve years although it has not broken out yet and there are grounds for believing that it never will, in the generally accepted sense; at any rate, in all conscience enough people have referred to it as "imminent", at pretty well all times during this period. These eloquent examples have been taken from a time when events are generally agreed to move faster than in ancient times, even than the theology and Church life of the fourth century. The situation of Athanasius, even between 346 and 351, was by no means secure, and, all in all, the best date for the *De Decretis* is in this period, about 350, leaving *Contra Arianos* I-III for the next six or seven years. (It need only be said that Athanasius's nervous anticipation of the future is quite compatible with his concentration on the past figures of Arius, Eusebius of Nicaea, and Asterius as the outstanding Arians; this is just the way people behave in this sort of situation, which is so familiar today.)

It still remains to put the remainder of the anti-Arian writings of Athanasius into their correct order. We shall have to lay on one side for the moment the "*Expositio Fidei*", as it is of not quite undoubted authenticity, and as there are no certain indications as to its date, except that, if authentic, it is probably an early work. It will be treated later in the Appendix <sup>(96)</sup>; even if it is decided that such a work is authentic, it is very difficult to use it for a study of the

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(96) See below, pp.



development of Athanasian theology. For this purpose one should, as one's primary sources, use only works whose authenticity and chronology can be established, to the satisfaction of the critic, beyond reasonable doubt. The first work of this character to come up for major consideration is the "De Sententia Dionysii" because the scanty temporal indications, such as they are, indicate, on balance, that this is the earliest of the major anti-Arian writings. (97) Montfaucon suggests that this Epistle arose out of the quotation by the Athanasius of extracts from Dionysius of Alexandria in De Decr.25, with the Arians calling for amplification, later. Robertson accepts this dating in general, if not in detail, and also maintains (98) that the fact that the controversy was theological suggests the period after, say, 348, since the Homoeousion is at issue, which reasoning we have thoroughly rejected. Against this is the fact that the controversy concerned a famous traditional leader of the Alexandrian Episcopate who, apparently at least, flatly contradicted the Nicene theology so staunchly supported by the present incumbent, which makes it more reasonable to assume that this is one of the first forms in which the Arian controversy would arise, at least as far as it directly affected Athanasius; this conclusion also agrees with the greater relative strength and concentration of Arianism in Egypt during the earlier days. This leaves the field open to the historical and personal indications in the book which strongly suggest that it was written during the lifetime of Arius. The suggestion of Montfaucon is a pure speculation for which the text of De Decr.25 and elsewhere provides no real evidence, and which reveals, to be perfectly frank, an almost total lack of sense

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(97) Migne, P.G. XLV; cxiv - right col. - ann.352.

(98) L.N. P-N.F. Introd. p.1. note 2.

of the way in which men's minds really work in situations like the Arian controversy.

The historical and personal references are as follows: (Ch.1 beg.) "You have been tardy in informing me of the present argument between yourself and the enemies of Christ, for even before Your Courtesy wrote to me, I had made diligent inquiries, and had learnt about the matter, of which I heard with pleasure (i.e. the refutation of the Arians by the addressee) . . . For whereas their heresy has no ground in reason (*εὐλόγον*), nor express proof from Holy Scripture, they were always resorting to shameless subterfuges (*προφάσεις* - cavillationibus) and plausible fallacies (*σοφίσματα πείθοντα*). But they have now also dared to slander the Fathers

. . . " This is the reference that most strongly suggests a later date for this work, especially if we consider that the sophisms and subterfuges refer to the activities of the Arian party in the Councils and Synods of the late thirties and early forties. But if we follow the other line, this passage can readily be regarded as an ironic admission that, after a period of palpably false argumentation, the Arians had *prima facie* scored their first direct hit on the Nicene position, and that the situation has in consequence become more challenging.

There are no other historical references that would be relevant. We now turn to the personal references. We exclude the general references to the heretics as "Arians", or other cognate expressions, as this is standard in Athanasius, although it is worth noting that they are never referred to by any phrase involving Eusebius of Nicomedia - an indication of the relatively early date of the book, after Nicaea, but probably in the lifetime of Arius and before the political intrigues of 335 and following years had become the predominant elements in the consciousness of Athanasius. The direct personal references to Arians



etc. are all to Arius himself; they are: ch.3: P.G.XXV 484B "For the Bishop Dionysius did not feel the sentiments of Arius, . . ."; ch.6, beg. - a comparison between the teaching of Dionysius and Arius, who is mentioned alone, three times, as the principal heretic of that school. Similarly, 12, near beg., ch.19 beg., ch.23 near beg., ch.25 beg., ch.24, 516B bis <sup>sc</sup> ~~etc.~~. These are the sort of instances in which the use of the present tense, the prevailing tense here, does not necessarily indicate that Arius is still alive, for the reason discussed above with reference to the historical references in Contra Arianos I-III. The important references are two in number: ch.23 beg.: "But since in (99) addition to all his own iniquities Arius has raked up this (100) expression as from a dunghill, adding . . . (the notion that the Logos is Logos only by participation in the quality Rationality) . . . and ch.24 beg. "These things Arius either never hears (<sup>2</sup>ἤκουσε), or heard and did not understand, the ignorant man! For otherwise had he understood, he would not have so grossly misrepresented the Bishop, but would have reviled him just like us, because of his hatred of truth. For being an enemy of Christ, he will not hesitate to persecute also those who hold the doctrine of Christ . . . ." The future ὀκνήσει may be used for vivid rhetorical effect, or it may be used eponymously, as representing, under the title of Arius, the whole race of heretics. But, in the main, these passages strongly suggest that Arius was still alive, or at least, which is if anything more important, that he was the standard opponent and "persecutor" of the orthodox doctrines, or at least the standard promulgator of the canon against Dionysius of Alexandria. As to "persecution" (διωκεῖν), while

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(99) συμπεφάρηκεν εἰς αὐτὸν - perfect tense.  
 (100) προστίθῃσιν - present indicative.

it need not be taken in its most extreme sense, Arius's notorious relations with proletarian mobs and bitter tongue would supply an adequate means for a war to the death with orthodoxy. In conclusion, two arguments of Stülcken are to be rejected <sup>(101)</sup>. First; that ἄλλὰ οὐδεὶς αὐτοῖς ἔτι πιστεύει, καὶ βιώσωνται συκοφαντεῖν. κατεχνώσθῃ γὰρ ἡ αἵρεσις παρὰ πᾶσι (oh.27:321A) indicates a time of peace. The context indicates that this sentence is purely rhetorical: "For they needs must, since they have fallen from the foundation of the Apostles and have no settled mind of their own, seek some support, and if they find none, and by misrepresenting the Fathers. But no one will believe them any more, even if they try sycophancy, for the heresy is condemned on all sides. Unless perchance they will henceforth speak of the devil, for he is their only supporter, . . ." Secondly he claims that the summary of passages of Scripture that are spoken of the Humanity of Christ exactly duplicates the great exegetical section of "Contra Arianos" I-III (almost the entire work) and it is more likely that the former is a summary of the latter than that the latter is a later extension of the former; hence, "Contra Arianos" I-III was already written before "De Sententia Dionysii". On the other hand, these conclusions do not necessarily follow, since these passages were all standard Arian citations (C.Ar.I:37 beg.). If we accept the Expositio Fidei as a genuine early work of Athanasius this type of Athanasian exegesis dates from before the earliest possible date for the "Contra Arianos" even on the theory of Stülcken and Loofs, and Marcellus of Ancyra is known to have adopted the well-known exegesis of Prov.8:22, forever associated with C.Ar.II:18-22, in his own writings, as early

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(101) op.cit. 42-43.



as c.335 (See Eusebius, of Caesarea, Eccl. Theol.III:chs.2 and 3.

The upshot of all this is that, although there is no conclusive argument, the weight of evidence suggests that the "De Sententia" was probably written about 335<sup>(102)</sup>, and was, more certainly, the first of the great anti-Arian writings, as some MSS. place it. Incidentally, this removes one difficulty of our dating of "Contra Arianos" I-III, since the Benedictine dating of "De Sententia" combined with it, would produce a congestion of output between 346 and 356.

The next dogmatic anti-Arian work, in order, appears to be "In illud omnia mihi tradita sunt" an exegesis of Matt.II:27 - Luke 10:22.

"This memorandum or short article was written, as its first sentence shows, during the lifetime of Eusebius of Nicomedia, and therefore not later than the summer of 342 A.D. The somewhat abrupt beginning, and the absence of any exposition of the latter portion of the text, have led to the inference that the work is a fragment: but its conclusion is evidently perfect and the opening words probably refer to the text itself." (Robertson, L.N. P-N.F., p.86). In the main, these conclusions are acceptable. The work begins with a citation of Matt.11:27 - Lk.10:22; following this, the first words of Athanasius himself are: "And from not perceiving this, they of the sect of Arius, Eusebius and his fellows<sup>(103)</sup> indulge impiety against the Lord." In a dogmatic work, it is not necessary to deduce from this that Eusebius of Nicomedia was still alive. On the other hand, he was certainly the principal Arian when this was written, and this would fix the terminus a quo at about 336, when Arius died and Eusebius burst into great prominence almost simultaneously; this, the sole definite historical

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(102) For the same line of argument and the same conclusion, see Stegmann, "Zur Datierung . . ." p.438-9.

(103) of τῆς ἀρεσκείας Ἀρείου, Εὐσεβίου τε καὶ οἱ οὖν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ.

and/or personal reference contrasts with those in *De Sententia Dionysii*, which are all to Arius; this is an indication that the latter-mentioned book is earlier. However, there are additional grounds for regarding this opusculum, if genuine, as quite early, even if "there is no conclusive evidence as to its date" (Robertson, loc.cit.). There are many important theological differences from the later anti-Arian treatises, particularly the *Contra Arianos* (104). Now, the differences are of such a character that it is most unlikely that these were written at any time near the composition of this work. Thus, if they are early, the latter should be late, and if they are assigned to the traditional date of 358, the *Omnia Mihi . . .* is either an early work or a work of Athanasius's extreme old age. We have already provisionally dated the *Contra Arianos* between 351 and 356; even this slightly earlier dating would mean that if this were written subsequently after any likely interval of time, Arius and Eusebius would almost certainly not be the only two persons mentioned. Thus, we settle for a time many years earlier than 350, that is the traditional dating of 336-338, the early date being confirmed by the fact that, as we shall show, in at least one important respect the type of soteriology in which it differs from the *Contra Arianos* it agrees, against them, with the *De Incarnatione* (105).

The question of the *τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις* in ch.6:P.G.XXV:220A, is a difficult problem, and leads, for instance, Hoss, *Studien*, p.51, to deny the authenticity of the work, especially as later in the same sentence, Athanasius speaks of God's *μία οὐσία*; by contrast, in the later works (de decr.27:P.G.XXV:465B; c.Ar.III 65:P.G.XXVI:461A-B; ad Afr.4:XXVI:103B) *οὐσία* and *ὑποστάσις* were assimilated. The

(104) See below, pp. 1007-11.

(105) See below, pp. 578 and 1009-11



argument appears to be the notion that if we find the late-orthodox formulation in one or two isolated places, among a vast number of other formulations that were later not used, it is far more likely than anything else to be due to the work's being late and spurious. But in this case it is quite possible that Athanasius obtained, by accidental combination, a formula which he did not retain, but which later happened to become orthodox. The reason is that Athanasius is dealing with an issue concerning the life and work and, above all, worship, of the Church - that is, the Arian claim that the Trishagion is repeated *diminuendo*, ending with a *pianissimo*, indicating a Trinity whose hypostases are subordinated *ad infinitum* as Arius said in the §"Thalia", vide De Syn. 15). Now, this would tend to make the writer refer to the Triplicity of God, the Three Hypostases, for three distinct reasons. First, the simple fact that the Trishagion is, after all "Holy, Holy, Holy, . . ." Second, the fact that (as we have noticed above), as compared with the conceptual theology of the Church, the liturgy of the Church has always emphasised the Triplicity of God; there is not in any creed an *Articulum De Deo* or *De Una Dei Essentia*, corresponding to the normal *Locus De Deo* in Dogmatics. Third, the fact that in this case in particular, where one contestant certainly, and probably both contestants, were Alexandrians, the traditional formula, *τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις* (106) of the Alexandrian Church in the previous century would be specially important, not to mention the fact that it occurred in Arius's own "Thalia". But a defender of the Nicene theology would have to support the Homocousion in the Nicene sense; this was also at that time an accepted ecclesiastical and credal formula, and, as Athanasius said, the "Lord God of

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(106) That this is the Eastern form is shown by Ad Afros 4; the alternative, One Hypostasis, is the translation back to Greek of the Latin, "una substantia".

Hosts" imperatively demands the single Essence, as does the fact that, after all, each Hypostasis is "Holy" and apostrophised as such. The whole passage runs as follows: "For the Triad, praised, revered,

and adored is one and invisible and <sup>(107)</sup> *ἀσχημάτιστος*. It is united without confusion (*ἀσυγχύτως*), just as the Monad is also distinguished without separation (*ἀτμήτως*). For the fact that these venerable living creatures offer their praises three times, saying "Holy, Holy, Holy" proves that the *τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις* are perfect, just as in saying 'Lord' they declare the *μὴν οὐσίαν*. They that depreciate the Only-Begotten Son of God blaspheme God, defaming His perfection and accusing Him of imperfection . . .

For he that blasphemes any one of the Hypostases shall have remission neither in this world nor in that which is to come . . ."

(ch. 5: P.G.XV:220A). This is very good Trinitarian theology of the developed type, but it is more likely to have been in fact the result of a fortuitous combination of circumstances which did not recur, as far as Athanasius's own life is concerned; and we have indicated how this would have happened. Thus, we need not assume that it represents a deliberate advance to orthodoxy, perhaps deducing from this that it is almost Athanasius's last work, but likewise there is here no reason to it as spurious. The style and content fit in perfectly with the other writings of Athanasius. For the same reason, the emphasis on *ὑποστάσεις* is not such a strong argument for an early dating (on the grounds of its agreement with the 3rd century Alexandrian tradition) as it is often held

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(107) Not quite "without degrees" (Robertson). The Benedictine Latin (Migne) is accurate, "nec ullam figuram habet", i.e. is without any configuration or schema like the diminuendo scheme postulated by the Arians.



(108) to be , but the other reasons for placing it early are strong enough. This dating holds in spite of the tendency in most MSS to place it after the Orations against the Arians. MSS evidence is seldom decisive in this connection for any scholar.

As for the "De Synodis", there is no doubt that it it was written in 359, but that chs.31 and 32 date from about 361. The Epistles to

(108) Of the very large literature on the question of the word *ὑποστάσις* in Athanasius, we can select Newman's Excursus "On the Meaning of the Phrase *ἐξ ἑτέρας οὐσίας ἢ ὑποστάσεως* in the Nicene Anathema" (in the "Select Treatises of St. Athanasius in controversy with the Arians", reprinted in P.N.P.-N.F.), Robertson, L.N.P.-N.F. Prolegg. ch.II, sect.3(2), esp.p.xxxii, Newman, "Arians of the Fourth Century", (3rd ed.), pp.441-453, Prestige, "God in Patristic Thought", chs.VIII and IX.

Most of even these writings do not do justice to the extreme rarity of the word in any Trinitarian sense in the writings of Athanasius. It does not occur in this way at all in the "Contra Gentes - De Incarnatione", and the only relevant references until C.Ar.I-III are: the one in question here, Exp.Fid.2:204A (if it be by Athanasius, at whatever time it may be) when Athanasius or the writer renounces *τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις μεμερισμένας* - it is impossible to say from such a renunciation of three divided hypostases what was being accepted, whether it was three undivided hypostases or another formulation altogether - ; De Decr.27:465C, where Origen is cited as describing the Son as the Image *τῆς ἀρχῆς καὶ ἀκατονομαστοῦ καὶ ἀφθέκτου ὑποστάσεως τοῦ πατρὸς*, and this is introduced, 465B, by the statement of Athanasius that Origen was denying the phrase cited above anathematized at Nicæa. In De Decr.26, Dionysius of Rome, in a phrase of which the example from the Exp.Fid. is a partial quote, denies "three powers or divided hypostases or Godheads" (461D) and continues (464A) that heretics divide the Godhead into *τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις γενεῶν ἀλλήλων παντάπασί κεχωρισμένας*. In the C.Ar.I-III, as we shall show later, the whole of the still scanty use of *ὑποστάσις* is dictated by its use in Heb.1:3, which is quite different from its later Trinitarian usage, but which is patently behind the reference that Athanasius cites from Origen. However, the worst possible solution would be to say that Athanasius did not say Three Hypostases in deference to Rome and the Western "una substantia" which is the exact etymological equivalent of *μία ὑπόστασις*, since he shows even less impulse - in fact, absolutely none at all - to use this than to use the Three Hypostases. Probably the best solution is that, by the time that Athanasius concerned himself with Trinitarian problems, he was so much under the influence of Heb.1:3, which after all gave him his favourite analogy, that he used Hypostasis only in that sense. On the other hand, what has never been noted, or hardly even in such studies, is the relative infrequency with which even *οὐσία* is used in this substantialist or essentialist way, Athanasius's preferred use being *κατ'οὐσίαν*, etc., and this dynamic rather than static use applies to all the Trinitarian and Christological formal terms, and even to the Humanity and Divinity of Christ which Barth (Ch.D.IV:II:26 f. E.T.) has criticised Chalcedon for interpreting statically.



Serapion on the Holy Spirit ~~and~~, as the opening of the First Epistle shows, also date from the Third Exile; they are important in this connection, because the Second is a summary of the anti-Arian writings. But the very important question of the chronological relation between them must be shelved for a time, since many of the problems in connection with it cannot be appreciated until a more exact doctrinal study has been made; the writer concludes that they are after the "De Synodis". The highly controversial "De Incarnatione et Contra Arianos", which Roman Catholic scholarship accepts, is far too dubious for inclusion in a thesis of this character, and will be considered in the Appendix. If it is by Athanasius, it is probably the latest of all. Thus the order of the major anti-Arian writings is as follows:

- 1 (335-36) De Sententia Dionysii
- 2 (336-42) In illud, Omnia mihi tradita sunt
- 3 (346-50) De Decretis Nicaeanae Synodis
- 4 (350-56) Orationes I-III Contra Arianos
- 5 (357) Epistola ad Episcopos Aegyptiae et Libyae
- 6 (359-61) De Synodis
- 7 (after 359) Ep. I-IV (esp. II) ad Serapionem de Spiritu Sancto

The Fourth Oration against the Arians is also treated in the Appendix, and it is regarded by all modern scholarship, including Roman Catholics, as being highly dubious or spurious.



THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF ARIANISMA NEW HYPOTHESIS

It is customary in writing about Athanasius to interpolate at this stage an account of the Arian heresy. The author will follow this same procedure in this case, not only because it is sanctioned by tradition, but because he is convinced that the usual accounts of this great heresy are unsatisfactory, and wishes, with the freedom enjoyed by those who present new things, to re-examine this question and to present, for what it may be worth, another hypothesis. He is doing this with his eyes open and accepts the risk that he may be deemed to be anachronistic, perhaps that the charge might be actually true, but, as will be shown later, it will be by no means irrelevant to the judgment and estimate of the work of Athanasius.

It would be fair to summarise the general run of interpretations of Arianism as follows: The Arians were, in essence, fanatical monotheists in the most literal sense, holding that God must be, in every possible sense, arithmetically one. Therefore, on that basis, there was no room for the Second Person to be anything but a creature, a *κτίσμα*, a *ποίημα* (1), whose origin was *ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων* (2); as for His title of "Son", sons normally do not co-exist with their parents, but on the contrary it is true about all sons that *ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν* (3), and *οὐκ ἦν πρὶν γεννηθῆναι* (4).

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(1) "Thing made"; passive verbal noun from *ποιεῖν*; no one good English word.

(2) "ex nihilo", or "from nothing."

(3) "There was once when He was not."

(4) "He was not before His generation." Of the last three phrases, the first is a stock phrase anyway, the last two are so alliterative and assonant that they appear to have been deliberately designed as slogans for the maximum of this effect. Therefore all three are normally left untranslated.

and, as Arius repeatedly said in the market place, in view of all this, what sort of Son is this that Athanasius and his party talk about? In so doing, the Arians resurrected the old Gnostic and pagan story of the world being unable to abide the presence of its God, and therefore needed an intermediary for its creation and sustentation. The result of all this was an eclectic and internally inconsistent patchwork quilt of heresy. To support it, the Arians resorted to a literalistic Biblical exegesis and severe sense of the difference between Divine and created reality, both of which they learnt from that suspect centre, Antioch; in fact, according to most received opinion, not only of Roman Catholic scholarship but also of Harnack and his school, the heresy virtually derives from Antioch through Lucian the Martyr, under whom both Arius and Eusebius of Nicomedia studied and whose memory was appealed to by the former in his plea to the latter. In fighting this phenomenon, Athanasius experienced a reaction which his enemies regard as the rabies theologorum and his friends as exemplary zeal for the Faith, which has left its mark on all subsequent Church history.

Now, it is true that all the arguments detailed above were propounded at one time or another by Arians. For instance, to go outside the inner circle of Arianism, it is true that Eusebius of Caesarea wrote a letter to Euphrasion in which he was audibly puzzled at the idea that the Son could be absolutely co-eternal with the Father and still have the degree of subordination implicit in His title. Athanasius's immediate predecessor, Alexander of Alexandria, did write in his letter that Arianism appeared to be the bad old theology of Ebion, Artemas, and Paul of Samosata, "whose successor Lucian remained excommunicated for a long period of years under three bishops."<sup>(5)</sup>

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(5) ὃν διαδεχάμενος Λουκιανὸς ἀποσυνάχωντος ἔμεινε τριῶν ἐπισκόπων πολυετέϊς χρόνους.



(ap. Theodoret, Eccl. Hist. I:3), which Arius had contracted from Lucian. On the other hand, we can say right from the start that there is something wrong with this picture, since it does not account for the atmosphere of fanaticism that always surrounded Arianism; there is no reason to assume that the feeling of menace that is one of the persistent impressions of both the anti-Arian dogmatic and historical writings of Athanasius was the phantasmagoria of a rabid theologian. No merely eclectic and inconsistent belief has the capacity to stir the depths of fanaticism; to do this, a heresy must have some sort of perverse unity about it, and for a writer to emphasise the inconsistency of Arianism simply means that he has not seen what the unifying factor is. Nor does this theory explain the other "atmospheric" element that pervades the whole of Athanasius, a feeling of the most intense and unpleasant shock and surprise that such a doctrine as Arianism is possible, even as a heresy.<sup>(6)</sup> Athanasius never suggests that Arianism is merely a recurrence, with relatively insignificant variations, of a stale old phenomenon that has been dismissed a hundred times in the past, even though this line would be rhetorically at least as effective as the line that he did actually adopt. Arianism is a "new" heresy, even, as he does not hesitate to describe it, a good candidate for the Precursor of the Antichrist.<sup>(7)</sup> The great methodological fault of the traditional historians of Church dogma, of all persuasions and all traditions, is that they do not see that for evidence of the nature and in particular

(6) See, e.g. C. Ar. I: 4, and 5 init., I: 22; I: 35: 84: BrC.

(7) Novelty: C. Ar. I: 4 init. I: 8 apud finem. II: 47 init. (where the basic tenet of Arianism is described as a εὐρημα, invention).

Diabolical Character of Arianism: De Decr. 5 apud finem. De Sent. Dion. 27 apud finem. C. Ar. I: 1: 13A. 10: 33A. Ep. Encycl. ad Episc. Aeg. et Lib. 8: 536 B.

Precursor of Antichrist (πρόδρομος τοῦ Ἀντιχρίστου, almost a technical term): C. Ar. I: 1: 13A. De Syn. 5. 688C.

what must be termed the sub-conscious basis of Arianism, Athanasius has absolute priority over any other source, or rather, any other orthodox source, in the absence, that is, of any discovery of primary Arian literature. After all, Athanasius was the principal antagonist of Arianism by a long way, in virtue both of his direct confrontation with it and of his own intellectual pre-eminence, his great middle writings were directed against Arianism first, foremost, and all the time, and he was at just the right distance to form the best judgment. Alexander's Letter was a snap judgment at the very outset of what might be called the Arian Revolution, and all estimates of this character are liable to be inaccurate; in particular, they will interpret the new change in terms of the old and familiar, even when the last-mentioned does not apply (that is, if the commentator does not lose his head altogether); the inertial principle of the psychology of revolution again! On the other hand, men like Theodoret and Epiphanius were in an even worse position; they wrote in an age which had not ceased to be revolutionary, but in which the centre of interest had radically shifted, and what is worse still had shifted virtually without a lucid interval. All these later authorities were writing from the thick of the later Christological controversies and the effective polarisation of Christian theology between Alexandria and Antioch, which was all too real a feature of that epoch of Church history, whatever was the case earlier. When we remember, too, that the Antiochene theology has had a much worse "press" than the Alexandrian, (among the orthodox representatives, Theodoret is much more suspect in "Catholic" circles than Cyril of Alexandria), we can see how the Antiochene aetiology of Arianism became the almost naturally accepted theory. Among Protestant Liberal scholars, the Hegelian habit of thinking in terms of a clean thesis and antithesis would have led in



the same direction; Athanasius is indelibly associated with Alexandria, so what could be more natural than that his arch-enemy be similarly associated with the antithetical Antioch? Harnack, under these circumstances, has accepted hook, line and sinker the evidence of the Arian historian Philostorgius, who virtually numbers Lucian with the Arians; Raven, although he accepts in general the Antiochene theory, says that he is "a bad witness unless strongly supported",<sup>(8)</sup> and points out, correctly, that he would be under great psychological pressure to twist the facts to give the Arian creed a martyrology. It is interesting to note that the general presumptions in favour of the Lucianic-Antiochene theory would have strongly appealed to the nineteenth century (and, perhaps in some ways previous ages), while our presumption against it, concerning as it does the revolutionary nature of the period, is something that would have almost no meaning for that age, at any rate for specialised Church life and theological scholarship, but which we in the twentieth century have obtrusively in our field of vision. We may be wrong, although the author in all humility thinks that we are in fact better qualified for this very reason. But we should certainly pay more respect, at least, to the element of doubt, especially as the Patristic evidence is contradictory. And in fact, when we look at the evidence in Athanasius himself, we find the element of doubt at its maximum. The Lucianic hypothesis of the origin of Arianism must be treated exhaustively at this stage, not only because it has found favour in the immediate past, especially among Roman Catholics, but primarily because it involves, in its familiar form, most of the possible doctrinal sources and the issues concerning them.

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(8) "Apollinarianism" p. 73-4.



A full consideration of scholarly opinion on Lucian of Antioch can make sense only after the Patristic evidence has been given, but it can be stated at the outset that the hypothesis is relatively recent even among Roman Catholics. Among the earlier representatives of this tradition, the remarks of Hermant (Paris, 1672),<sup>(9)</sup> can be considered typical, that even though Arius studied under Lucian, it would be unjust to saddle this martyr, so praised by John Chrysostom, with the errors of his pupil. About 40 years later, Ceillier, the principal Roman Catholic authority in the 18th century, took a similar position, as we shall see below. The first scholar to have accepted the hypothesis appears to have been Möhler, in 1827,<sup>(10)</sup> for whom it accounted for both the suddenness of the apparent onset of Arianism and the opening lines of the "Thalia",<sup>(11)</sup> which he took circumstantially and literally and not as a piece of sheer impertinence.

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(9) "La Vie de Saint Athanase, Patriarche d'Alexandrie." I: 12: p. 61: Car ils avoient vraysemblément esté compagnons dans l'école de Saint Lucien d'Antioche, et c'est pour cela qu'Arius appelle Eusebe un véritable Collucianiste, quoyqu'il soit injuste d'attribuer ses erreurs à ce généreux Martyr qui a reçu tant d'éloges de Saint Chrysostome."

(10) Johann Adam Möhler, "Athanasius der Grosse und die Kirche seiner Zeit, besonders im Kampfe mit dem Arianismus." Mainz, 1st edition 1827, 2nd edition 1844. See p. 173, 2nd edition. Möhler denies that it has any root in any earlier Father, including Origen; see pp. 193-198, and the whole of Book I for a full treatment of the earlier Fathers; Origen is strongly defended, 82-96; if only, he says (83), Rufinus had not been so indiscreet in his defence of Origen and so provoked Jerome. Neither Platonism nor even the post-Constantinian influx of paganism could be considered as a direct cause (171) except insofar as the latter weakened the Church.

(11) The relevant extract from the "Thalia" is (Ath. C. Ar. I: 5, apud init.:)

"According to faith of God's elect, God's prudent ones,  
Holy children, rightly dividing, God's Holy Spirit receiving,  
Have I learned this from the partakers of wisdom,  
Accomplished, divinely taught, and wise in all things,  
Along their track have I been walking, with like opinions,  
I the very famous, the much-suffering for God's glory,  
And taught of God, I have acquired wisdom and knowledge."



Some years later, Newman,<sup>(12)</sup> just before his conversion to Rome, gave the hypothesis its full and detailed form, in which the errors of Lucian (or at least his potential errors, which finally grew into the Arian heresy) were closely associated with a certain Judaic and Aristotelian element in the ecclesiastical and intellectual tradition of Antioch, along with moral laxity, and - most significant of all - with Lucian the Martyr's own record as a critical exegete of Scripture and as the founder of the Antiochene exegetical tradition. Theologically, Arianism was regarded as in the direct line of descent from the heresy of Paul of Samosata, so definitively associated with Antioch. This remained the standard position until about 1914. Since then, the tendency has been to repudiate the last sentence and to associate Lucian and Arius rather with the Origenist opposition which condemned Paul of Samosata, but the connection between Lucian the Martyr and Arianism has still been retained. These remarks apply in the main to the Roman Catholic position, although the even more unreserved acceptance of the Lucianic hypothesis by Harnack has prevented a full-scale Protestant counter-attack on it. The emphasis on Lucian's importance as a Biblical critic and exegete excites the suspicion that one of the aims, or at least subconscious aims, of the Roman Catholic scholars has been to attack the Protestant doctrine of the primacy of Scripture as against ecclesiastical tradition, and it is interesting to note that the apparent originators of this hypothesis were the first instances in history of a theological offensive in the interests of Romanism from within an intellectual and general environment that was stably, and by long tradition, Protestant, or at least inimical

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(12) "The Arians of the Fourth Century", The citations and paginations are from the Third Edition, London, 1871; there is almost no change from the First Edition, 1833, even some of the early anti-Roman passages are left standing, with comment added. For Antioch, see pp.1-25; Judaism and its relation to Antioch 10-25; Sophism, etc. and Aristotelianism in relation to Antioch, 25-39. Antiochene exegesis as illustrated by Theodore of Mopsuestia (no direct Lucianic evidence being available) 413-25.



to Rome. (13)

The primary Patristic evidence is difficult and contradictory. Eusebius of Caesarea, for what he is worth, in his "Ecclesiastical History", is warm in his praise; (14) more significant perhaps is the praise of the later and unquestionably orthodox John Chrysostom. (15) In addition, Rufinus, in his Latin translation of Eusebius's "Ecclesiastical History", appends, at the relevant place, a creed attributed to Lucian the Martyr which is completely orthodox except for the denial of the human soul of Christ. The "Lucianic Creed", presented at the Council of the Dedication at Antioch in 341 and which is probably genuinely Lucianic, (16) is reasonably orthodox in its Christology except that the Homousion is not mentioned; on the other difficult issue of the human soul of Christ the nearest that it gets to a specific reference is the participial phrase *ἰσθῶσαν γενόμενον* applied adjectivally to Christ, but this means that it says no more and no less than the Nicaeano-Constantinopolitan Creed. In fact, as we shall see later, this phrase would count as an excellent summary of the mature Christology of - Athanasius himself, at any rate as in the "Contra Arianos" I-III. (17) As for the unfavourable evidence, there is, first

(13) The author has not studied Newman in any detail at all, and says this therefore with trepidation, but he has never known any commentator to notice the pointed resemblance between the theology of these two great men. This would be a fruitful subject of research, whether there was any connection between them, or whether the resemblance was purely generic.

(14) VIII: 13 and esp. IX: 6.

(15) Hom. in S. Lucianum Martyrum.

(16) See Athanasius, De Synodis 23. Caspari, Alte und Neue Quellen . . . p. 42, n., says, following Philostorgius apparently, that the creed is best considered as Lucianic but with Asterian interpolations. The question of the alleged interpolations will be discussed below, to the detriment of the supposition in question. With this exception, critical opinion generally agrees that there is no good reason for denying the Lucianic authorship.

(17) See <sup>above</sup> ~~below~~ p. 634-2482 and above pp. 994-999 and 1092-1097.



the statement cited above from the Letter of Alexander of Alexandria to his namesake of Constantinople or Thessalonica which describes Lucian, or one Lucian, as the successor to Paul of Samosata. At the end of the famous letter of Arius to Eusebius of Nicomedia, Arius addresses Eusebius as *συλλογικιστῶν ἀληθῶς Εὐσεβίε*, the last two words, of course, constituting an untranslatable pun.<sup>(18)</sup> However, it must be borne in mind that the immediate context of this peroration is an appeal for support for auld lang syne, to wit, the persecutions that they had all shared as followers of Lucian, presumably on the occasion of his martyrdom in 312. Now, as we know so poignantly to-day, solidarity in suffering is a powerful factor in determining actions and sympathies, but unfortunately it is for that reason one peculiarly liable to abuse. We are all familiar with Communist members of, say, the French Resistance Movement, which was non-Communist in its origin and inspiration, making just this sort of appeal to their fellow-members who may in fact not be Communists at all; the same sort of thing is endemic in trade unions and is the bane of their lives. Thus, on general principles and apart from what we know independently of Eusebius of Nicomedia, this peroration should not incriminate even the recipient of the letter, and a fortiori not the Lucianic School as a whole.

The strongest unfavourable primary sources are Epiphanius and the Arian historian Philostorgius. The latter, in Photius's Epitome of his Ecclesiastical History, II: 13-16, claims Lucian as an Arian martyr before Arius, enumerated his followers among the leading Arians, including Arius himself (who studied in Antioch in his youth), and,

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(18) Opitz. Urkunde I (Theodoret H.E. I: 5

Epiphanius Haer. 69: 6 (I)

among the Asiatics, Eusebius of Nicomedia, Athanasius of Anazarba, Paulinus of Tyre, Asterius the Sophist, and others - the great body of the Asiatic Arian party. In ch. 15, he actually maintains that the pure milk of Arianism was corrupted in the direction of orthodoxy by - of all people! - Asterius the Sophist, who inserted the orthodox ἀπράλλακτος εἰκὼν, applied to the Second Person, into the original Lucianic Creed at the Dedication in 341 at Antioch. Raven describes Philostorgius as a bad authority, unless otherwise corroborated, and in this case he would have an obvious motive for at the very least stretching the truth. Epiphanius had no such obvious reason for falsification, and his evidence is fairly definite, though not as definite as that of Philostorgius, but there are certain peculiarities about it that make it more dubious than has been usually assumed. Epiphanius maintains that Lucian was virtually the originator of Arianism, but this statement is not made under Arianism (Heresy No.69), which would be the proper place, and where Lucian is not mentioned, or in any separate numbered heresy devoted exclusively to him, but in an introductory gloss to No. 43, where he is differentiated from the much earlier Lucian the Marcionite, who is the subject of this section. There is nothing in Epiphanius corresponding to the definite statement of Irenaeus, which is of course in its appropriate place, that Cerdo was the genuine, if less celebrated, predecessor of Marcion.<sup>(19)</sup> In Haer. 76: 3, he says, like Philostorgius, that Asterius was really a moderate Arian or even a Semi-Arian at heart; he is known to have attended the Council of the Dedication at Antioch in the company of the moderate Dianius of Caesarea Mazaca. The other important reference

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(19) Adv. Haer. Book I: 27: 1



is in Ancoratus 33 (see also Haer. 69: 19: 7) to the denial of a human soul in Christ by "Lucian and all the Lucianists"; he adds unkindly that presumably they do this so as to be able to attribute the human statements about Christ to what is normally taken as His Pre-existent Deity. Eustathius of Antioch (apud "De Anima, in Theodoret, Dial. 56) made an identical charge, but without any reference to Lucian or to anything more specific than the Arians as a whole. The opening of the Letter of Eusebius of Nicomedia to Paulinus of Tyre, which Harnack takes as the final proof of the Lucianic hypothesis, actually does not do so at all; it is simply a statement that the Arians constitute a united collective group, or if they do not they ought to. This does not mean much except insofar as the conclusion of the letter of Arius to Eusebius of Nicomedia, already cited, indicates that, for better or worse, this intense collectivism may have been characteristic of Lucian and his tradition.

The interpretation of the above material has been as various and as contradictory as the material itself. As we have seen above, Newman, following whether dependently or independently the tentative suggestion of Möhler, developed the Lucianic hypothesis to the full.<sup>(20)</sup> (p. 6): ". . . (Lucian) may almost be considered to be the author of Arianism." (6-7): "Now Lucian's doctrine is known to have been precisely the same as that species of Arianism afterwards called Semi-Arianism" (on the basis of the Lucianic Creed). (p. 9): ". . . (during the controversy) 'Antioch is the metropolis of the heretical, as Alexandria of the orthodox party.'" The evidence is as we have already

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(20) See Note (12) above.

cited, together with what Newman regards as the silence of the Catholic authorities where they could have defended Lucian.<sup>(21)</sup> Newman does not doubt that all the references to "Lucian" are to the same person, and the conclusion therefore followed that there was an absolutely continuous line between the heresy of Paul of Samosata and Arius. This remained the critical position of Roman Catholic scholarship until about 1914, as is shown by Le Bachelet,<sup>(22)</sup> Tixeront,<sup>(23)</sup> Lauchert,<sup>(24)</sup> and, rather more tentatively, Atzberger<sup>(25)</sup> and Weigl.<sup>(26)</sup> The only Greek Orthodox writer to which the author has had access, the Archimandrite Constantinides,<sup>(27)</sup> follows Newman completely, to a degree unusual for a book published in 1937.

In the same type of tradition among Protestants, Harnack accepted the Lucianic hypothesis even more thoroughly than Newman, without the reservation that we have indicated above in the latter-

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(21) Loc. cit. p. 7.

(22) X. Le Bachelet, in "Dictionnaire de Theologie catholique," article, "Arianisme". Cols. 1779-1863; esp. col. 1791.

(23) J. Tixeront, "History of Dogmas", E.T. Vol. II: 21-32, on Arianism, esp. 21-22.

(24) Dr. Friedrich Lauchert, "Das Leben des Athanasius des Grossen", 1911, pp. 20-21.

(25) Vater Leonhard Atzberger, "Die Logoslehre des hl. Athanasius. . ." 1880, pp. 22-33, esp. 26-28 on Lucian and Antiochene theology generally. The most cautious of these accounts. This element is treated as one of a number of possible or contributory sources, including the Origenist tradition at its worst (24), Philonism and Neo-Platonism (24-26), rationalism of the Aristotelian kind (29-33) and a long-standing confusion between creation and generation (28-29); there were other less direct contributory factors.

(26) E. Weigl, "Untersuchungen zur Christologie des hl. Athanasius." 1914, pp. 9 f.; also pp. 14 f., where he accepts C. Ar. III: 51: 429 as indicating the virtual identity of Arianism and Paulianism.

(27) Μ. ΑΡΧΙΜΑΝΔΡΙΤΟΥ ΜΙΧΑΗΛ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΙΔΟΥ, Ο ΜΕΤΑΣ ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΟΣ ΚΑΙ Η ΕΠΟΧΗ ΑΥΤΟΥ, ΑΘΗΝΑΙ 1937. The author was at the time head priest of the Greek Orthodox Temple of the Holy Wisdom, London. See pp. 38-39.



mentioned's case.<sup>(28)</sup> To Harnack, Lucian was "the Arius before Arius",<sup>(29)</sup> the main authority being Philostorgius. Again, "In Lucian's teaching, Adoptianism is combined with the doctrine of the Logos as creature, and this form of the doctrine is developed by the aid of the Aristotelian philosophy and based on the critical exegesis of the Bible."<sup>(30)</sup>

Robertson accepts both Newman and Harnack, the latter rather than the former, although his general position in all but Protestantism was far closer to Newman.<sup>(31)</sup> He builds a picture which is highly speculative (he admits that Lucian's relation to Paul of Samosata is "not clearly defineable") of Lucian accepting the whole of Paul's system with only two modifications, a hypostatisation of the Logos which his predecessor had regarded as impersonal, and a denial of the human soul of Christ which enabled him to ascribe the humble expressions for Christ to the pre-existent Logos. He admits that this involved a compromise with the Origenist type of subordination, without realising how serious would have been the change involved; actually this speculation amounts to the statement that Lucian, in his heretical stage, actually became a hyper-Origenist, an extreme representative of the tradition that had drummed him out of the Church. Later, Raven remained in the same

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(28) Citations here as elsewhere are, unless otherwise stated, "History of Dogma," being the English translation by Buchanan, Millar, and M'Gilchrist of the Third German Edition of the "Dogmengeschichte". Vol. IV, pp.3-7 on Lucian, and 13-21 on Arianism.

Incidentally, one point might well be disposed of now,; otherwise it might be embarrassing later. Loc. cit. p. 7, Harnack refers to the doctrine of Lucian, by which he means Arianism, as a "Technology", or a doctrine of the Begotten and the Unbegotten; the same mistake is still made in the Fourth German Edition. This is simply a crass confusion, which is excusable to an Englishman or a Frenchman, but which neither the German Harnack nor any of his presumably Scottish translators had any right to make, between τέχνη, skill, and τέκνον, offspring. The word required was "Teknology". As we shall show, this is quite wrong even in its amended form as a description of Arianism; it is actually, once the confusion similar to that between γεννητός and γεννητός etc. is cleared up, a very good description of the theology of Athanasius!

(29) loc. cit. p. 4.

(30) loc. cit. p. 6.

(31) Introduction, L.N.P-N. F.-Athanasius, p. xxviii.



historical tradition, but was personally favourable to Lucian, drawing eloquently a picture of a man who nobly atoned for his past errors by his later reconciliation to an Origenist Church of Antioch and subsequent glorious martyrdom;<sup>(32)</sup> although Newman and Robertson both admit his reconciliation, the picture of Raven is overdrawn. Recently, Prestige, while not doing anything to alter the historico-critical basis, has criticised the whole story, pointing out, rightly, that Robertson's hypotheses outlined above are too much to assume. *(God in Patristic Thought 116)* Earlier, the Lucianic hypothesis had been criticised also by Gwatkin,<sup>(33)</sup> the first major critic of the hypothesis: "Nor was it even accidental that Arianism broke out at Alexandria rather than elsewhere. It is not clear that Lucian of Antioch was heretical, whatever his disciples may have been, and if Arius carried away questionable opinions from his school, so did others. If therefore it was at Alexandria that they grew into Arianism, we may suppose that circumstances were more favourable to their growth at Alexandria than elsewhere. And this is indeed the

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(32) "Apollinarianism", pp. 72-78. Previously, pp. 41-72, he had given an account of the Antiochene background that was entirely in agreement with Newman's, and with the same implication, although less specifically and polemically drawn, as to its significance for the genesis of heresy, and without suggesting that Lucian was the quintessence of this bad Antiochene spirit in the way that he was for Newman. On the other hand, Raven's bete noir is the Alexandrian Christology, to which he regards the Antiochene theology, even of the Samosatene type, as a reaction.

(33) "Studies in Arianism", London, 1st ed. 1882, 2nd ed. 1900. Also "The Arian Controversy", London, 1st ed. 1889, 4th ed. 1898, later eds. to 1914. Citations are from the Second Edition of the former work. The note of Robertson, loc. cit. xxviii, n.1 (1892) that Gwatkin's omission in the latter work of the vindication of Lucian made in the former work <sup>amounts to a retraction</sup> has turned out to be incorrect, since it was left unchanged in the second edition, after four editions of "The Arian Controversy". The reason for the omission was patently that the latter was a shorter work, in which there would be justification for leaving out a highly controversial issue.



case. Origen and Dionysius must be acquitted of heresy, but their language leaned to Arianism quite as much as Lucian's."<sup>(34)</sup> And again, "As the earlier school of Antioch was not the germ of Arianism, so neither was the later school in any way its out-growth. Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia were zealous defenders of the Nicene faith, and their followers never had any of the characteristic doctrines of Arianism. . . . The Antiochenes erred in their sharp separation of the Lord's two natures, but the Arians impartially abolished both and left an idolatrous abomination in their place."<sup>(35)</sup> And again, "Against the statement of Alexander of Alexandria (Theod. I: 4) that Lucian remained outside the Church for a long time under three successive bishops, we may set, (1) his high character with all parties - even Athanasius never attacks him - and (2) in particular the creed ascribed (it seems rightly) to him at the Council of the Dedication. It is substantially as orthodox a creed as could be written without the gift of prophecy to foresee the adoption of the word *συμμορφιον*. (3) The reckless tone of Alexander's letter, which throws serious doubt on statements in which he might easily have been mistaken.

The further charge of Epiphanius, Ancoratus 33, that Lucian denied the Lord's human spirit, may refer to his disciples, but there is no clear case for a charge of heresy in Lucian's own time. There is really nothing against him but the leaning of his disciples to Arianism, and we shall see presently that this case can be otherwise explained. See *infra*, ch. III."<sup>(36)</sup> We have quoted in extenso from Gwatkin because

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(34) p. 17; pp. 1-32 is a discussion on the nature of Arianism, with emphasis on its essentially pagan character.

(35) p. 19.

(36) p. 17 n.

he is the best representative of the position that will ultimately be taken. Unfortunately, in ch. III of his book, his explanation of the proneness of Lucian's disciples to Arianism, which is entirely in terms of the political state of Asia and the events of the decade following Nicaea, is not really satisfactory; the question is difficult in any case, but we shall attempt a better explanation.

All the authorities cited so far have this in common, that they accept, or at least do not challenge, the traditional idea that all the relevant references to Lucian in the Fathers refer to the one person. However, more recent scholarship inclines to the view that Lucian of Antioch, the martyr and exegete, was actually an Origenist, probably of the extreme type, and correspondingly that the Lucian to whom Alexander of Alexandria refers as the successor of Paul of Samosata was another bearer of what after all was an exceedingly common name. Eduard Schwartz<sup>(37)</sup> led the way with his picture of a (presumably Origenist) Lucianic school which was in close alliance with the pro-cultural element in the Church of Alexandria which was in line with the older tradition of the Catechetical School but under attack from an anti-intellectual party which had gained control of the Episcopate; among the allies of the latter against the Lucianists was the Eustathian party which was now in control of the Episcopate of Antioch. Later,<sup>(38)</sup> Loofs developed this type of argument further, and maintained that there was another Lucian, who was no less and no more than the immediate successor of Paul of Samosata as Bishop of the heretical Paulianist Church of Antioch, which was still important enough to be the object

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(37) *Gesammelte Schriften*. Bd III, 169-187, esp. 176-180. (= *Nachrichten Göttingen*, 1908, 354-9, 365-74).

(38) *Paulus von Samosata*, 1924, 182-186.



of conciliar action at Nicaea. What is more, the recipient of Alexander's letter, his namesake of Constantinople, was a bishop and would have understood the relevant extract in this sense.<sup>(39)</sup> The objection to this interpretation is that the context of the remark suggests succession to heresy rather than merely the institutional succession to an anti-episcopate, and, again, why would Alexander have introduced Lucian's name if he had not been a successor primarily in heresy? The passage after all does not look like the sort of reference that would be made to the second bishop, or anti-bishop, of a secession that was still current at the time that the letter was written. This question is difficult on any theory.

Loofs completes the picture by pointing out that the orthodoxy of Eustathius of Antioch is by no means as certain as has been commonly assumed.<sup>(40)</sup> This argument has been carried much further in R.V. Sellers's definitive book on Eustathius of Antioch.<sup>(41)</sup> The contention is that this great defender of Nicaea did not completely and unequivocally support the eternity of the Logos, and had tendencies (but fortunately no more than tendencies) towards the position usually attributed to Paul of Samosata, and afterwards taken by Marcellus of

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(39) Op. cit. p. 185: "Nach dem Hinweise auf die Absetzung des Bischofs Paulus von Samosata, konnte dies *<<ὁν διαδεξάμενος>>* von einem Leser, der nicht sofort an Lucian der Märtyrer dachte, nur in dem gewöhnlichen Sinne der bischöflichen Amtsnachfolge verstanden werden."

(40) Op. cit., 193-210.

(41) "Eustathius of Antioch", London, 1928.

Ancyra.<sup>(42)</sup> These are, respectively, that the Logos dwelt impersonally in God the Father and came down later in its perfection on Jesus of Nazareth at His conception, and that an original Sabellian type of monadic "Trinity" became triadic by dilation. Correspondingly, Sellers accepts the Lucianists as extreme Origenists, but even though he denies that they can be considered the direct fathers of Arianism, he still allows that they were the indirect ancestors par excellence, in their capacity as Origenist extremists.<sup>(43)</sup> The most interesting example of this newer approach is the Roman Catholic G. Bardy. In his earlier book, "Paul de Samosate. Étude historique" (1923)<sup>(44)</sup> he accepts, on the basis of C. Ar. III: 51 and Hist. Ar. 71, that Athanasius regarded Paulianism as the direct ancestor of Arianism.<sup>(45)</sup> However, in his later work, "Recherches sur Saint Lucien d'Antioche et son École," 1937,<sup>(46)</sup> he accepts to a large extent the more modern line on these matters, while feeling that Loofs's arguments are not strong. He goes so far as to say that there must have been two Lucians,<sup>(47)</sup> on the

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(42) Op. cit. pp. 82-120.

For Marcellus of Ancyra, see, as primary sources, the "Contra Marcellum", and "Ecclesiastical Theology" of Eusebius of Caesarea, which are ferocious attacks on Marcellus garnished with long quotations from his works, which are the main survivals. It is generally recognised that the Orat. IV C. Arianos of Athanasius, dub., is directed against Marcellus and/or his more extreme disciple, Photinus. The definitive monographs on Marcellus are, Zahn, "Marcellus von Ancyra", Gotha, 1867, and Gericke, "Marcellus von Ancyra, Der Logos-Christologe und Biblizist . . .", Halle, 1940. In the latter, the case is made out that the represents a survival of the true Hebraic Old Testament doctrine of the Logos as Word, proceeding from the Father; the more usual picture, based especially on C. Ar. IV, is that the doctrine was one of dilatation of the original Monadic Father into a Trinity, with its assumed subsequent diastolic contraction; this would have more affinity with Stoicism.

(43) Op. cit., pp. 2-3.

(44) Published in Paris and Louvain.

(45) Op. cit., p. 23.

(46) Published by L'Institut catholique de Paris.

(47) Op. cit., pp. 46-58.



following two grounds, first, that Lucian's alleged subordinationism and actual denial of a human soul in Christ brand him as a hyper-Origenist, and such a man, on such an issue, could not be a Samosatene; second, if Lucian had been a known previous heretic, there would have been some obvious difficulty, to say the least, about the recognition either of Lucian by the Lucianist bishops, or the recognition of the Lucianist bishops by their fellows. This would have preceded, and been quite independent of, the Arian issue, since the majority of the Lucianists were already safely in their sees before about 320. Bardy also points out that the weight of the Patristic evidence is that Lucian the Martyr was never out of the Church.<sup>(48)</sup> His study of the question of the "Lucianic" Creed of the Council of the Dedication<sup>(49)</sup> yields the conclusion that the verdict is not proven but that the creed is most likely correctly ascribed to Lucian. The creed is mainly directed against Marcellus of Ancyra, which shows its Origenist provenance. Bardy's final statement that the doctrine of Lucian the Martyr and exegete is known only through his followers<sup>(50)</sup> is an admission of the shakiness of any Lucianic hypothesis, although he still regards him as the fairly direct ancestor of Arianism.<sup>(51)</sup> It is interesting to note at this stage that, a century before the Lucianic hypothesis in its

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(48) p. 91. Cf. also the previous work, pp. 192-194, where he points out that the debatable statement of Alexander of Alexandria is the only thing that could be taken as Patristic evidence that Lucian the Martyr was ever outside the Church; at the earlier time, he considered the case not proven, in contrast to his later positive conclusion.

(49) Op. cit., pp. 91-132. Bardy considers that the external evidence is dubious (91-119), but that the internal evidence shows that the creed resembles the rest of what is known of Lucian.

(50) Op. cit. p. 181. Similar admissions are made by Loofs. PRE (3rd ed.) Pt. II, p. 1019 and Tixeront, History of Dogmas, E.T. Vol. II. p. 22, etc.

(51) Op. cit. p. 58.

familiar form was propounded, Ceillier actually postulated three Lucians, the Paulianist anti-bishop, the martyr, and the Origenist exegete, which is about as sensible an interpretation of the highly dubious material as has ever been suggested.<sup>(52)</sup>

The thing that is common to everybody - one authority might perhaps disagree on one of the questions - is that Lucian was an Antiochene, a martyr, a great Biblical exegete and scholar, a man of suspect theology, and closer to being the ancestor of Arianism than anyone else. The author feels that if one has to choose between Paulianism and hyper-Origenism as the heresy of Lucian the choice should be the latter. On the other hand, the possibility that there was one Lucian who changed his position during his lifetime, cannot even now be excluded. On the other hand, Lucian may have been completely orthodox, or as orthodox as any of his contemporaries. But, on the basis that Lucian was heretical or suspect, there is another possibility that nobody has so far mentioned, that Lucian's heresy or heretical tendency may have been of a peculiar character which was not perfectly detected or understood by any of his contemporaries. The author, for what it is worth, suggests Christological Hegelianism as a possible candidate for such a position. Although it is extremely speculative, it fits the known facts better than any other hypothesis. The doctrine in question is that the absolute identity of human and divine natures, which Hegel presented as an absolute truth or ideal truth or perfection<sup>(53)</sup>, is the actual and empirical truth in Jesus Christ. It would be an obvious violation of the Chalcedonian *ἁποχρίσις*. Incidentally, was this adverb

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(52) Ceillier, R.P. Dom Rémy, O.S.B. Re-issue, Paris, 1860, of *Histoire générale des Auteurs Sacrés et Ecclesiastiques*. Vol. III pp. 73-77, on Lucian; see p. 77.

(53) See, for example, "Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion", E.T. Vol. II. p. 349, and Vol. III, p. 73.



inserted merely for the sake of completeness, or was it directed against any specific heretical party? The ordinary accounts of Church history do not indicate any group whom this particular cap fits. As well as Christological Hegelianism being a violation of this adverb, the *ἀντιχριστιανισμός* can only be directed against this particular heresy. As will be seen later, the author is perhaps not entirely disinterested in raising this hypothesis, but there is a case for it on the known facts alone.

But after this speculation, we must return to more solid ground to the significance of what Newman refers to as the silence of the Catholic party in defence of Lucian,<sup>(54)</sup> and Gwatkin as the fact that even Athanasius never attacks him - in other words the fact that his name is never so much as mentioned by Athanasius, even in the celebrated catena of the early leaders of Arianism in De Syn. 17. We know from the whole character of Athanasius's writings and his treatment of personalities that if Lucian had been anything less than a bigoted and fanatical Arian Athanasius would have defended him, in the way that he frequently defended Eusebius of Caesarea;<sup>(55)</sup> after all, Lucian died before the Arian issue became acute, whereas Eusebius frequently allowed himself to be a fellow-traveller with the heresy, Lucian was a martyr, which Eusebius was not, Lucian was never a personal enemy of Athanasius, which Eusebius actually became for a while about 335, and finally, Athanasius, from the point of view of the prestige of the Patriarchate of Alexandria, may have had little cause to defend Lucian, but had at least as little to defend Eusebius. This is a

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(54) "The Arians of the Fourth Century", 3rd ed. pp. 6-7.

(55) See above, pp. 265-8 and below pp. 378-82

most serious objection to the Lucianic hypothesis as postulated by Newman, where Lucian appears as an early Semi-Arian rather than a full Arian. However, it favours, if anything, the more extreme form which we find in Harnack. If Lucian had been, on the other hand, an Arian extremist from the beginning - and it must be understood that nobody except Harnack has been prepared to go as far as this - Athanasius would have had three choices; he could either have tried to make the best case that could be made for him, he could have condemned him as unreservedly as he condemned Arius, which would have been following his episcopal predecessor's example, if the statement in question had referred to the same Lucian, or, on the principle that one should say no ill of martyrs, he could have kept silence. There is of course no way of estimating the likelihood of each of these possibilities, but the last, which is the only one that really fits the Lucianic hypothesis, is probably all told not particularly likely in spite of its plausibility. Further, all the above depends on the Arians having appealed to Lucian from the beginning of their history, and thus leaves open the other possibility that no such appeal was actually made at all. And when we examine the "silence" of Athanasius further, we find that it is not a case of silence pure and simple, but that the omissions, along with the whole general character of Athanasius's theology, are of such a character as to cast the gravest doubt on the Lucianic hypothesis in any form in which it has ever been, or can ever be, accepted.

To take the Samosatene form of the hypothesis first, we shall at a later stage treat exhaustively Athanasius's references to Paul of Samosata and his doctrine in relation to Arianism, and shall show that, as Athanasius saw it and presumably in fact, the Arians did not regard Paul of Samosata as their direct ancestor but rather as someone to be avoided, and that where Athanasius insists that the Arians fall into Samosatene or Paulianist errors, he simply means that at these points



the Arian theology has pulled itself apart. This leaves the hyper-Origenist form. Now, two essential and constitutive elements of the theory on this basis are, that Lucian denied the human soul of Christ and on that basis interpreted all references to Him in Scripture as referring to what orthodox theology takes to be His Deity, and that Lucian, as in the case of the Lucianic Creed of 341, expressed an advanced form of Arianism which was softened by Asterius (!), by, in the instance in question, the insertion of the ὑπαρξάντος εἰκῶν .

As we have seen above, this is the position that we meet in various ways in Epiphanius, among the orthodox, and the Arian Philostorgius, and it is the direct evidence of these against the circumstantial evidence of Athanasius. However, there are several reasons for giving far more weight to Athanasius than would appear to be justified. Fraud and mendacity were so common at that time that strong circumstantial evidence can be frequently held to overthrow direct evidence. Secondly, the methodology of Epiphanius is so bad and naïve, consisting as it does in the simple enumeration of heresies by their ordinal number since Jesus Christ, as if he had a perverse delight in accumulating the maximum number, that it practically precludes any intelligible account of the relation between one heresy and another, or even the raising of the question. This, the absolute blind spot of Epiphanius, is one of the strongest points of Athanasius, even though it does not declare itself on a cursory examination of his writings. Finally, as we have said, it was after all Athanasius and not Epiphanius or even Philostorgius who really knew Arianism at first hand, in his case as its great antagonist. Thus, we shall now examine Athanasius's treatment of the two issues that we have specified.

In the first place, if Lucian, on the theory, was the true theological progenitor of Arius, Arianism would have included from the very beginning, in the theology of Arius and everybody else, in Antioch and in Alexandria alike, as an essential and constitutive element, the denial of the human soul ( $\psi\chi\acute{\alpha}$ ), or perhaps human spirit ( $\piνε\acute{\upsilon}\mu\alpha$ ), in Christ. In that case, Athanasius would have had to treat this issue clearly and unambiguously, in these very exact terms. Instead, we find Athanasius using language which at least provides some ground for radical Protestant critics assuming that Athanasius himself adopted the same proto-Apollinarian type of Christology! Indeed, as we shall see at the appropriate place, even the average Roman Catholic writer says no more than that Athanasius denied this type of Christology implicitly, without denying it explicitly,<sup>(56)</sup> and recently the Roman Catholic M. Richard maintained that Athanasius never mentioned the topic explicitly at all.<sup>(57)</sup> All this applies to the period before 362. In this context, even the Roman Catholic interpretation of the Christological evidence constitutes a fatal admission. Thus, whatever may have been the case at Antioch, the denial of the human soul of Christ could not have been a constitutive part of the Arianism that Athanasius knew at Alexandria, that is, the Arianism of its eponymous founder himself. Indeed, it is in the highest degree improbable that it formed an essential part from the beginning even at Antioch, as long before 362 Athanasius was familiar with Arianism in all its ramifications and at its full extent, including most emphatically Syria, Asia Minor, etc.. Of course, it would have been much more

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(56) See above, pp. 110-11, and below, pp. 1000-1003.

(57) "Saint Athanase et la Psychologie du Christ selon les Ariens", *Mélanges de Science religieuse*. Lille (Facultés Catholiques) 1947, p. 6.



prominent in the later Arianism, if only because of the emphasis of the humanity of Christ in the anti-Arian exegesis of Athanasius, and the prominence of this in Eustathius of Antioch and Marcellus of Ancyra would have probably meant that the Antiochene form of Arianism reached this stage as early as, say, 345. Unfortunately, we do not know for certain how late is the fragment of Eustathius of Antioch which is the first sign of conflict between Nicenes and Arians in the field of the human soul of Christ. But even in Antioch it is not likely that this became an issue much less than a generation after the martyrdom of Lucian, in such a way that Athanasius would have recognised it as any sort of element in the struggle, even in spite of the possible Paulianist tendencies among the Eustathians.

Secondly, Asterius. The idea that Asterius was a moderate who tended towards what was later known as Semi-Arianism cannot stand up to examination, unless we assume that there were two people of that name, or that Athanasius not only faked whole passages from his Syntagmation, but also managed to surround them by a most peculiar and unmistakeable variant of the aroma of the heresy. For Athanasius's estimate of the person of Asterius, see the references to ὁ θύσας Ἀστέριος, Asterius who sacrificed, that we have collated above.<sup>(58)</sup> As to his doctrine, the most celebrated passage is as follows: (De Synodis 18, beginning at 713C; also partly cited in C. Ar. I: 32, and almost completely in C. Ar. II: 38): "For the Blessed Paul said not that he had preached Christ, His, that is, God's 'Own Power' or 'Wisdom', but, without the article, 'God's Power and God's Wisdom' (I Cor. 1:24), preaching that the own power of God Himself was distinct, which was con-natural and

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(58) pp. 256-8, 260-1, 263.

co-existent with Him unoriginately, generative indeed of Christ, creative of the whole world,<sup>(59)</sup> which he teaches in his Epistle to the Romans, thus: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." For as no one would say that the Deity there mentioned was Christ, but the Father Himself, so, as I think, His eternal power was not the only-begotten God (John 1: 18), but the Father Who begat Him. And He tells us of another Power and Wisdom of God, namely, that which is manifested through Christ, and made known through the works themselves of His ministry.

. . . Although His eternal Power and Wisdom, which truth argues to be Unbegun and Ingenerate,<sup>(60)</sup> would appear to be one and the same, yet many are those powers which are one by one created by Him, of which Christ is the First-born and Only-Begotten.<sup>(61)</sup> All however equally depend upon their Possessor, and all His powers are rightly called His Who created and uses them; for instance the Prophet says that the locust, which became a divine punishment of human sin, was called by God Himself not only a power of God but a great power (Joel 2: 25). And the blessed David too in several of his Psalms invites not angels alone but Powers also to praise God. And while He invites them all to the hymn, he presents before us their multitude, and is not unwilling to call them ministers of God and teaches them to do His will.

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(59) ἄλλην μὲν εἶναι τὴν ἰδίαν αὐτοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ δύναμιν, τὴν ἐμφυτοῦ αὐτῷ καὶ συνυπαρχούσαν αὐτῷ ἀγενήτως κηρύσσων. γεννητικὴν μὲν οὖσαν, δηλονότι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, δημιουργικὴν δὲ τοῦ πάντος κόσμου.

(60) ἀνάρχον τε καὶ ἀγενήτον.

(61) πρωτότοκος καὶ μονογενής - here as always.



(ch. 19) . . . The Son is one among others; for He is the first of things originate, and one among intellectual natures;<sup>(62)</sup> and as in things visible the Sun is one among phenomena, and it shines upon the whole world according to the command of its Maker, so also the Son, being one of the intellectual natures, also enlightens and shines upon all that are in the intellectual world.

. . . And before the Son's origination, the Father had pre-existing knowledge of how to generate; since a physician too, before he cured, has the power of curing.

. . . The Son was created by God's beneficent earnestness<sup>(63)</sup>, and the Father made Him by the superabundance of His power.

. . . If the will of God pervaded all the works in succession, then certainly the Son too, being a work, has at His will come to be and been made."

To the same section belongs a further extract quoted in C. Ar. II: 40 (at end of 232A): "God the Logos is one, but many are the things rational; and one is the essence and nature of Wisdom, but many are the things wise and beautiful. . . . Who are they whom they honour with the title of God's children? For they will not say that they too are Logoi, nor maintain that there are many Wisdoms. For it is not possible, whereas the Logos is one, and Wisdom has been set forth as one, to dispense to the multitude of children the essence of the Logos and to bestow on them the appellation of Wisdom." This last passage is rather obscure, since the lack of context does not permit us to see to whom the rhetorical question refers, but Athanasius takes it to be the final self-contradiction of Asterius, since he has to admit a Wisdom co-eternal and co-unoriginate with God. We shall have

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(62) τῶν νοητῶν φύσεων  
(63) Εὐεργετικῇ φιλοτιμίᾳ.

to consider this whole question from the point of view of Athanasian<sup>as</sup> theology later; in particular, the validity of Athanasius's final position. Athanasius, in the manner of the early Plato, assumes that such a Wisdom must be distinct from the Father in the sense that the First and Second Persons are distinct,<sup>(64)</sup> and as such would have to be identical with the Second Person Who was incarnate in Jesus Christ. Asterius would presumably have made no such admission, and the passage is patently a further attempt to bolster up the opinion that the Logos, in the usual sense, is a creature in exactly the same way as any other creature. Incidentally and parenthetically, it is most interesting to see Asterius arguing, or attempting to argue, in the same early Platonist way<sup>(65)</sup> that has often been considered to be antithetically characteristic of Athanasius as against the Aristotelianism, alleged or real, of his Arian opponents, particularly Asterius.

The main passage here cited, Asterius's exegesis of I Cor. 1:24, is certainly among the two or three worst exegeses in history. Karl Barth is right in saying that the early Church showed too little sense of Paul's theological position,<sup>(66)</sup> but the case is far worse here; for sheer disregard of the immediate context this exegesis of Asterius is absolutely without parallel save only the Arian exegesis of Philipp. 2: 9-10. One shudders to think of what St. Paul would

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(64) That is, in the way that a Form must be distinct from the Particular. Of course, in this case, Wisdom cannot transcend God.

(65) That is, that the relation between the archetypical Wisdom which existed originally (and presumably impersonally, for Asterius) within God, and every distinct entity which participated in it, comprising all wise things and Wisdom as the Second Person as well, is that of Form to Particulars.

(66) Ch. Dogm. Vol. IV. Pt. 1 p. 623.



have said to anybody who tried to tell him that he was placing Christ Crucified in a class which included men and even locusts. This passage shows, as hardly anything else, the lengths to which the Arians could go to show that Christ was a creature just like the others, and that His very pre-eminence could not mitigate His creaturely status in the slightest. It is true that Paul did not use the definite article in the Scriptural passages in question, but in view of the plain meaning of the context the only possible explanation is that he was using a Semitism corresponding to the construct state; on this basis, "Power" and "Wisdom" would not have an article because the dependent genitive would be deemed to make them definite enough; the corresponding indefinite expression, which would be what Asterius wanted, would have been "one of the powers of God".

The extracts quoted in continuation are further intensification and development of the basic position of the absolute creatureliness of the Logos. With these may be grouped the extract cited in C. Ar. III:60, in which the same point is made with special reference to the Logos-Son existing at the will of the Father, as the Arians maintained: "For if it be unworthy of the Framer of all to make at pleasure, let His being pleased be removed equally in the case of all, that His majesty be preserved unimpaired. Or if it be befitting to God to will, then let this better way obtain in the case of the First Offspring. For it is not possible that it should be fitting for one and the same God to make things at His pleasure and not at His will."<sup>(67)</sup> Asterius is simply putting explicitly the Arian position that there can be only one type of relationship between God the Father and any other entity,

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(67) τὸ θέλειν ἐπὶ τῶν ποιουμένων ἑρμότηειν, καὶ τὸ μὴ βούλεσθαι προσήκειν.

including the Son as personally distinct; therefore, in this case, since God made all things by His will, the same must have applied to His relation to the Son, and as an act of will is by definition not co-extensive in time or eternity with the willer, it followed there was once when the Son was not, that He was a creature, etc.<sup>(68)</sup>

To complete the picture as presented by the citations specifically of Asterius in the writings of Athanasius, we have two on the relation between the creativity of the Father and of the Son: (C. Ar. II: 24, apud fin.): "God, willing to make originate nature,<sup>(69)</sup> when he saw that it could not endure the untempered hand of the Father and creation by Him,<sup>(70)</sup> makes and creates first and alone One only, and calls Him Son and Logos, that through Him as a medium<sup>(71)</sup> all things might thereupon be brought to be." This doctrine is also mentioned, without direct citation, in De Decr. 8, beginning. In each place, Athanasius points out that, as the Son-Logos is a creature in the same way as anything else is, the *τρίτος* argument automatically follows to invalidate the reasoning of Asterius, and the Arians generally. Still on the same basic topic, Asterius discusses another aspect in the following citation: (C. Ar. II: 28: 205C): "But, though He is a creature and of things originate, yet as from a master and artificer has He learned to frame, and thus ministered to God Who taught Him."

The last passage that we shall quote, to complete the Athanasian citations of Asterius, is proof of the resolution with which

(68) See C. Ar. III: 58 ff.

(69) τὴν γενητὴν... φύσιν.

(70) τῆς παρ' αὐτοῦ δημιουργίας.

(71) τούτου μέσου γενομένου... δι' αὐτοῦ...



Asterius pressed the heresy. The greatest defect of the average argument from Scripture is that only the favourable passages are used, while the problem of the apparently unfavourable passages is shirked. Neither Athanasius nor the Arians, including emphatically and perhaps supremely Asterius, were ever guilty of this form of cowardice. Here is Asterius on John 14:10, and one must compliment him on facing the problem, however impossible his solution: (C. Ar. III: 2, beginning:) "It is very plain that He has said that He is in the Father and Father again in Him for this reason, that neither the word on which He was discoursing is, as He says, His own, but the Father's, nor the works belong to Him, but to the Father that gave Him the power." A man who would interpret asymmetrically a passage which is most obviously and most deliberately symmetrical must have been unusually dedicated to his theological cause.

These passages, taken together, reveal no moderate or semi-Arian, but a really fanatical Arian, fully worthy of his reputation as one of the three principals of the Arian heresy.<sup>(72)</sup> Almost more than anyone else, Asterius devoted his great ability to proving that Christ must have been a creature in exactly the same way as all other creatures were. While this point was affirmed by all Arians, often with great emphasis, Asterius took the trouble to prove it and illustrate it with minute and circumstantial detail, in the process straining Scripture to the limit - in fact, far beyond the limit. It is probably true that, owing to his great learning in the ordinary sense of the word, one can see more of other systems in his thought than we can in the sheer affirmations and negations of Arius himself, and that this might have

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(72) There is very little about Asterius in the literature except as a by-product of studies on Arianism. The last chapter of Bardy's "Recherches sur Saint Lucien d'Antioche ..." is on Asterius.

given the appearance of greater moderation, especially to his contemporaries (who, after all, we must admit, did have access to a wider selection of his works than we have). On this matter, it is however striking that the secular system revealed in the extracts cited is actually Platonism, in the very respects in which it differs from the Aristotelianism traditionally ascribed to Asterius. As far as heretical Christian ways of thought are concerned, we can likewise see rather more of Gnosticism, that is at any rate, the idea that the world could not endure to be created by God and needed an intermediary being, and, on the other hand, the system traditionally, and debatably, attributed to Paul of Samosata, of an apparently impersonal Logos-Wisdom of which Christ was the supreme Partaker, but with the difference that in this case the supreme Partaker is not the man Jesus of Nazareth who did not exist before He was conceived in the Virgin Mary, but the hypothetical purely creaturely Logos-Son Who created and antedated the rest of the world. Also, the thoroughness and detail of his argumentation meant that he was thrown up against the final difficulties of Arianism more decidedly and more obviously than his fellows. But even with these qualifications Asterius is still in essence not a Semi-Arian,<sup>(73)</sup> nor anything at all by half-measures, but completely and whole-heartedly an Arian. Indeed, by far the best analogy to the position of Asterius in the Arian movement comes from modern times. If Arius can be considered as the Karl Marx of Arianism, Eusebius of Nicomedia as its Nikolai Lenin with a difference, and perhaps Ulfilas the Goth as its Mao Tse-Tung, Asterius is beyond all doubt the Friedrich Engels of the

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(73) The usual opinion, following Epiphanius<sup>v</sup> and Philostorgius, I:14.  
Hae. 76:3



heresy. To return to the matter immediately in hand, the story that he inserted the *ὑπάρλλακτος εἰκῶν* into an otherwise true-blue Arian creed of Lucian cannot be true, or if it is true it could only be because Asterius already intended some ontological form of the epistemological doctrine of the later Anomoeans that all men had in principle perfect knowledge of the Father,<sup>(74)</sup> since the Logos as a creature did, which is in fact simply the dialectical antithesis of the earlier Arian doctrine that the Logos did not have perfect knowledge of the Father, since other creatures did not and the Logos was as much a creature as they; the common element within which this antithesis applied was, of course, that the Logos and other creatures were creatures in exactly the same way.

Thus, two most important props of the traditional mature form of the Lucianic hypothesis are denied by Athanasius, not explicitly, but about as effectively as they ever could be disproved in a court of law. It is thus the direct evidence, not of the strongest character, of Epiphanius and Philostorgius, against the unusually strong circumstantial evidence of Athanasius. The author, in this case, would certainly accept the evidence of the latter, and come to the conclusion that the Arians never appealed to Lucian until a late stage in the controversy, say about 345 at the earliest anywhere, and that the detailed form of the Lucianic hypothesis is a clumsily contrived Arian myth to bolster up a weak case and to acquire a martyrology that was never rightfully theirs. One would wish to conclude that Epiphanius borrowed the story from Arian sources. Unfortunately, there is no firm evidence of this, since Philostorgius flourished at least a quarter

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(74) See Epiphanius, *Haer.* 76. and Socrates, *Ecl. Hist.* IV:7

of a century later than Epiphanius. But this still leaves time for Epiphanius to have borrowed the legend from some late Arian source, and it bears all the marks of such a provenance.

The only thing that yet remains to be done on the Lucianic issue is to explain the apparent proneness of his disciples to become Arians. The sort of explanation proposed by Gwatkin,<sup>(75)</sup> that it was a political reaction against the overbearing triumph of the earlier Nicene generation, and that the conservative tendency in the East would attach itself to ante-Nicene theology, with the result that it would have an equal chance of falling on the Arian or the Nicene side even if all things were equal, in the event of being forced to make a choice, is not good enough. Perhaps this proneness, as we see it, is in part an artefact due to the later tradition that is found in Philostorgius. On the other hand, it is evident also from the catena of Arian statements and their perpetrators in Athanasius, *De Synodis* 17. The soundest conclusion from this is that Lucian was such an eminent figure in Antioch, which was itself after all one of the two great Christian academic centres, that anyone of great eminence in that region would certainly have studied under Lucian, if he had been alive at the right time, or under his successors. The problem thus becomes one of accounting for the greater tendency of the Asiatic bishops to become Arian. It can be said at once that this is a tendency on which, whether by reason of the facts or of Christian charity and the preservation of Christian unity, Athanasius never says so much as a single word. Nothing was ever further from his mind than the mutual recrimination between the two great Patriarchates that began so soon

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(75) "Studies in Arianism", Ch. 3.



after his death, on the Christological issue. What is more, the tendency probably did not prevail in the earliest days of Arianism, whatever emphasis we may choose to lay on the early study of Arius under Lucian indicated by the  $\sigma\upsilon\lambda\lambda\omicron\upsilon\kappa\iota\lambda\nu\iota\sigma\tau\hat{\omega}$  at the end of his Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia. After all, the only two bishops who actually refused to sign the Creed of Nicaea were Egyptians; even Eusebius of Nicomedia did not manage to go to this extreme. Thus, there is a resemblance between this problem and the question of why a German creed like Marxism achieved its supreme flowering in Russia; Alexandria was intellectually the Germany of early Christian culture and civilisation. Perhaps it was the accident that the opponents of Arius in its original home included an Athanasius. Or perhaps even this was not quite accidental; it might have been the more rigorous intellectual training and dialectic technique that Athanasius learned in Alexandria, since, even though other qualities are necessary at a still deeper level, no heresy can be countered theologically without a most strict discipline of the mind. To put this matter another way, one possible reason, for which modern criticism has unearthed firm evidence, is the theological incompetence of the Asiatic or Antiochene supporters of Nicaea, as compared with Athanasius; the supreme members of this class were Eustathius of Antioch and Marcellus of Ancyra; the former was by no means free from the taint of Paulianism, and the latter's condemnation by his conservative and Arian opponents on the grounds of virtual Sabellianism has in general been endorsed by later scholarship.

To sum up: The possibility cannot be excluded that Lucian was in some way or in part heretical, and had infected his scholars with some sort of predisposition to heresy, but the evidence is so doubtful

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and so speculative that nothing can be based on it. The least likely hypothesis of all is that Lucian was a direct ancestor of Arianism in the sense proposed by Harnack. Thus it is fair to say that the Lucianic hypothesis, which has bulked so large in the aetiology of Arianism, falls in practice to the ground. With it goes a large part of the Roman Catholic view that Arianism was the result of critical exegesis of Scripture uncontrolled by Church tradition, which was facilitated by Lucian's fame as an exegete, in spite of the complete absence of first-hand knowledge of his actual exegesis. We can now continue, unimpeded by this very large red herring, to analyse the relationship of Arianism to other contemporary heresies and movements of which we have some more certain knowledge. In all cases, the unique authority will, for reasons explained above, be Athanasius.

To start with, there is the question of Paul of Samosata. Unfortunately, we are immediately confronted with another question on which the state of critical opinion is such as to demand imperatively further attention at this stage. What was actually the theology of Paul of Samosata? It is a notorious fact that, in the act of condemning Paul as a heretic in 269, the (presumably Origenist) Synod at Antioch also banned the term *δμοούσιος*, which was a grave complication at Nicaea and afterwards. The traditional interpretation,<sup>(76)</sup> which is derived from the account of Hilary of Poitiers (the relevant Synodal Letter yielding no reliable clues), is that Paul had used the term in a quasi-Sabellian sense to describe a Logos-Wisdom which dwelt eternally in God in an impersonal way, as a pure quality; it was this that came upon the man Jesus of Nazareth in a perfect way which was

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(76) Cf. for what follows, Loofs, "Paulus von Samosata," 149 ff.



nevertheless like the way in which it comes upon other men; Christ, in the sole sense in which He hypostatically existed, did not exist before the Incarnation.<sup>(77)</sup> Hilary accepts this on the authority of the Sirmian Letter of the Homoiousian Party soon after its formation at Ancyra in 358.<sup>(78)</sup> But we find in Athanasius an account that is almost contradictory, De Synodis 45: 772 C-D, which Athanasius cites as an illustration of the need to be sure of the right meaning of technical and non-Scriptural terms: "For they who deposed the Samosatene took the Homoousion in a bodily sense (*σωματικῶς*), because Paul had attempted sophistry in saying, 'Unless Christ has of man become God, He would actually be *ὁμοούσιος* with the Father, and so there would have to be three Essences, one essence prior to them, and the two essences derived from it. So they rightly were on their guard against the sophistry of Paul, and declared that Christ was not Homoousios. For the Son is not related to the Father as he imagined. But the Bishops who anathematized the Arian heresy saw the craft<sup>(79)</sup> of Paul, and, reflecting that the word Homoousion did not have this meaning when applied to incorporeal things, and least of all to God . . . (they dealt with Arianism and declared the Son Homoousios) . . .". The *prima facie* meaning of this statement is that Paul of Samosata condemned the Homoousion as much as anybody ever did, on the ground that, if it is accepted, there would have to be a third essence at least to account for the unity of essence between Father and Son:

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(77) See Hilary, Ep. 81: (After a reference to the authority of the Semi-Arians, Hilary states that Paul of Samosata was condemned and the Homoousion banned) . . . quia per hanc unius essentiae nuncupationem solitarium atque unicum sibi esse patrem et filium praedicabat.

(78) Ep. 82, 535A.

(79) πανουργίαν.

perhaps (although the extract cited does not go as far as this) the whole *προς* argument or infinite regress would follow. This appears to contradict the argument of Hilary. The only other significant Patristic evidence is in the Epistles of Basil (Migne, PG XXXII:393A), where the text in the generally accepted version appears to support Athanasius. This would strengthen the case for this conclusion because of the Cappadocians' stronger sense of the personal distinction between Father and Son, which, other things being equal, would encourage them to condemn Paul of Samosata for Hilary's reason. But there is a strongly attested textual variant at this point according to which the Homoousion was condemned by "*ἐκείνοι*", which Loofs believes can refer only to the condemning court and not to Paul or even his party at all. (80)

Now, a close examination of the evidence of Athanasius gives a very interesting result, that is, that all three interpretations are represented in his writings. If there is one thing that Athanasius said, or meant to say, in the extract cited above, it is that the Bishops in 269 also accepted fully the argument of Paul of Samosata. When one reads between the lines of the extract quoted from De Synodis 45, and the surrounding material in chs. 43-47, especially the

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(80) Loofs follows Hilary's interpretation, accepting the Sirmian Letter as the only primary source. Prestige, "God in Patristic Thought," 200-213, rejects Hilary and chooses Athanasius, on the ground that the Semi-Arians would have garbled the issue so as to involve both Paul of Samosata and Marcellus of Ancyra with the rejected term Homoousion. Lebon, "Le Sort du 'Consubstantiel' nicéen," *Revue de l'Histoire ecclésiastique*, LXVII (1952): 3-4, pp. 496-502, also accepts Athanasius, and interprets Basil as supporting Athanasius to the hilt (the conclusion thus following that Basil was not, pace Harnack and others, a virtual Homoiousian). Kelly, "Early Christian Creeds, 1958, p. 248, accepts Hilary on the ground that Athanasius was not a disinterested witness and that his account was in accordance with his interest. He refers to Bardy, "Paul de Samosate . . ." 2nd ed., Louvain, 1929. The author has not seen the 2nd edition, but in the first edition, 1923, pp. 24-27, the treatment is not so definite.



exhortations in chs. 43 and 45: 772 A-B, to treat the Fathers with respect, it emerges that, however understandable, pardonable, or even expedient their conduct was in the short run, the Bishops at Antioch quite literally panicked; they could not see any way to avoid the dilemma presented by the accused in support of a doctrine patently wrong and heretical, so they had to justify their condemnation by extending it also to the Homoousion. Athanasius is virtually saying that the Nicene interpretation of the Homoousion, ~~that~~ it could not be interpreted in the way which applies to bodies (or Platonic particulars), as we read it in the Letter of Eusebius of Caesarea to his congregation, and as it is to be presented much more clearly and definitively by Athanasius himself in this very work, especially ch. 51, would itself have been completely adequate to dispose of Paul of Samosata, if the condemning court had been able to see it thus. As far as Hilary's interpretation of the condemnation of Paul of Samosata is concerned, there is strong evidence from silence against it, that is, that Athanasius, in all his argument against the Two-Wisdom theory of Asterius, never once comments on its resemblance to the doctrine of Paul of Samosata, or its Sabellian element as interpreted by Hilary. Perhaps he regarded the fact that Paul of Samosata referred to the man Jesus where Asterius referred to the pre-existent Logos as constituting a decisive difference. However, there is one passage in which the Arians, but not specially Asterius, are hypothetically mentioned, and which provides evidence for Hilary's version of Paulianism: De Decretis 24: 457D end, and following. Athanasius has been discussing the Scriptural metaphor of Light and Radiance applied to the relation between First and Second Persons respectively, and says that this makes nonsense of Arianism and commits one absolutely to the Nicene

theology, "unless indeed these perverse men make a fresh attempt and say (τοὐ μὴ πάντες πᾶν εἶποιεν) that the Essence of the Logos is one thing and the Light which is in Him from the Father is another thing, as if the Light in the Son were one with the Father, but He Himself is foreign in essence (ξένος κατ' οὐσίαν), as being a creature. Yet this is simply the belief of Caiaphas and the Samosatene, whom the Church expelled but these are now disguising (οὗτοι δὲ νῦν ὑποκρίνονται). . . ."

As a matter of fact, all three interpretations can be reconciled and synthesised with the greatest of ease into what, as a heresy, is a completely intelligible, credible, and coherent position. What Paul of Samosata evidently said was that no two beings could be personally distinct - like the Father and Logos, especially in the Origenist theology - and at the same time Co-essential, without a third antecedent Essence as yet another distinct entity, or perhaps more. Therefore, if we speak of a Light, Logos, Wisdom, etc., of the Father, it can only have this impersonal, quasi-Sabellian sense. ✓  
Therefore Christ, as a hypostatically or personally distinct being, must be purely and simply a man in whom this impersonal Logos dwelt supremely, and can only be considered God in the purely adoptionist sense. And with the recent example of their fellow-Origenist Dionysius of Alexandria before them, it was all too easy for the bishops who tried Paul to accept the basis of his reasoning and condemn the Homocousion instead of his theologically unsatisfactory interpretation of it. This is very close to the traditional interpretation; it differs, if anything, in a greater emphasis on the adoptionist and purely Humanitarian Christology, and less on the Sabellianising tendency, which would have been a subordinate feature. This would



make it easier to understand the attitude of Athanasius to Paul of Samosata, since he also takes the Humanitarian Christology as being the most important aspect of his theology. Perhaps Athanasius is not as good an authority on Paul of Samosata as he is on the Arians, but it is an eloquent testimony to the intellectually unsatisfactory position at the end of the third century that, in spite of his lateness, Athanasius is, even on Paul of Samosata, probably again the best authority that is extant.

Having prepared the way, let us now consider Athanasius's own estimate of the heresy of Paul of Samosata. It is nonsense to say that there was any affinity between the mature theology of Athanasius and the kind of Homoousian theology taught by Paul of Samosata.<sup>(81)</sup> The whole evidence is that Athanasius regarded Paulianism as a peculiarly odious and virulent heresy, compared with anything but Arianism itself. He had not one good word to say of it from start to finish. But the real point now is its relation to Arianism. The earliest reference, which is not directly relevant, is in Apol. C. Ar. 25. The first theologically and critically important references are in the "De Decretis". The passage already cited in ch. 24 appears at first sight to be a direct charge that the Arians are reintroducing the heresy of Paul of Samosata, but it is to be noted that the passage is hypothetical in form, in that it indicates the theology to which the Arians would be reduced if they really sustained their position in the face of the Scriptural analogy of Light-Radiance; unless they took the step that Athanasius hypothetically suggested, the concluding words

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(81) We have already cited the incredible statement in this sense made by Canon F.W. Green "Essays on the Trinity and Incarnation", p.257.

of the extract cited would be no more than a hyperbole rhetorically indicating the end result of their theology. The other extract begins at De Decr. 9: 432B: " 'Yes,' they will say, 'we have found another argument (which indeed I formerly heard τῶν περὶ Εὐαγγελίου say,) 'on this ground do we consider that the Son of God has the prerogative over the others<sup>(82)</sup> and is called Only-Begotten, because alone He partakes of the Father,<sup>(83)</sup> while all other things partake of the Son' . . . (ch.10, beg.) For if He were called God's Son and we the Son's sons, that fiction would be plausible, but if we too are said to be sons of God Whose Son He is, then we too partake of the Father . . . And . . . it does not matter whether the Son had something more and came to be first, and we something less and came to be later, so long as we all partake of the same Father and are called His sons. For the more or less does not indicate a different nature, but is attached to each according to the practice of virtue,<sup>(84)</sup> so that one is placed over ten cities and another over five; . . . With such ideas, however, no wonder they imagine that of such a son God was not always Father, and such a son was not always in being but came into existence ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων as a creature, and was not before He was generated, for such a one is other than the true Son of God. But to persist in such teaching is inconsistent with piety,<sup>(85)</sup> for it is rather the tone of the Sadduces and the Samosatene, . . ." As often happens in the "De Decretis", the argument is not as clear as in the "Contra Arianos", but it is fairly easy to follow it. It is actually the same argument as is developed with great detail and perfect clarity in C. Ar. II: 18-43 and elsewhere, that all creatures

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(82) πλεον τῶν ἄλλων.

(83) μετέχει τοῦ Πατρὸς - as usual.

(84) τῆς ἀρετῆς ἢ πράξεως.

(85) οὐκ ἔστιν εὐσεβές.



have the same rank in the sense that none can have the sort of pre-eminence postulated by the Arians and required for their system. (86)

What Athanasius is saying is that, for this reason, the efforts of the Arians to give a creature such a pre-eminence must fail, and that therefore the final result of their theology will be that they will have no choice but, against their will, to let the Logos-Son (for them a creature), whom they desired to treat as absolutely pre-eminent over all creation, fall back to the level of ordinary creatures. Therefore, since Christ is known as incarnate, this must mean in practice that He would be specifically an ordinary human being simpliciter; this is of course the heresy of Paul of Samosata or a simple reversion to Judaism.

Of course, Arianism and Paulianism have the feature in common, that the Second Person, or at least Christ as He is hypostatically distinct from the Father, is a creature, to put the matter at the intensional minimum. Athanasius of course recognises this and says so, and no one can begrudge his right to comment accordingly. On the other hand, on the basis of ordinary logic, any two entities whatever have some feature or other in common, even if it is a feature that can normally be described only as a negative term. The only two types of terms that are really intensively exclusive are pairs of logical opposites, as well as such related extensively intersecting intensive exclusives as men and non-poets. Thus it may be very misleading to notice resemblances without carefully comparing them with the differences. Even in this case where the resemblance is quite important, it is not fair to conclude that Athanasius stressed it without going into the question of the difference.

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(86) For a full exposition see below pp. 821-834.

Paul  
the  
son  
of  
man  
the  
son  
of  
man

There is some ambiguity in the passages cited from the "De Decretis." There is none whatever about the passages from the "Contra Arianos", which are crystal clear on this point. On the question of the sense in which a becoming, or rather a change from non-being to being, can be predicated of the Son, Athanasius says, (I: 25 PG XXVI 64C) that the only possible sphere of reference is to the fact that "whereas He was Son of God, He (sc. the Father) made Him at the consummation of the ages also Son of Man, unless forsooth, after the Samosatene, they affirm<sup>(87)</sup> that He did not exist at all, till He became man." The reference in I: 38 is even more important. The topic of discussion is the Arian exploitation of Philippi. 2:9-10, which the Arians interpreted as proving that the Son was a creature. He points out that, for one thing, they blatantly ignore Philippi. 2:6, and for another thing, if one does ignore the context, the plain meaning of the passage cited would be, on their basis, that the titles of the Son, the Name that is above every name, and all the glory connoted thereby, would be the reward of His conduct during His earthly life, but eleven generations before the time of writing, with the following absurd consequences: (89C) "What then was He before this, if He was exalted, and began to be worshipped, and was called Son, when He became man? . . . For if the Lord be God, Son, Logos, yet was not these things before He became man, either He was something else besides these and afterwards partook of these titles owing to virtue, as we have said; or they must adopt the alternative (may it return upon their heads!) that He did not exist before that time, but is entirely man by nature (φύσει) and nothing else. But this is no sentiment of the Church, but of the Samosatene and the present Jews. . ."

In II: 13: 173A, Athanasius makes exactly the same point, but rather more elliptically, this time with reference to Acts II: 36: "If then

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(87) εἰ μὴ ἄρα . . . εἴποιεν



they suppose that the Saviour was not Lord and King even before He became man and endured the Cross, but began to be Lord then, let them know that they are openly reviving the statements of the Samosatene."<sup>(88)</sup>

On I: 38, Newman's note is perfectly lucid and absolutely correct, except that he does not see its own implications against the Samosatene form of the Lucianic hypothesis which he propounded: Now the text in question, as it must be interpreted if it is to serve as an objection, was an objection also to the received doctrine of the Arians. They considered that the Lord was above and before all creatures from the first, and their Creator how then could He be exalted above all? They surely, as much as Catholics, were obliged to explain it of our Lord's manhood. They could not then use it as a weapon against the Church, until they took the ground of Paul of Samosata." The picture presented by Athanasius is that the Arians, so far from feeling themselves in the direct line from Paul of Samosata, actually wanted to avoid as much as possible, even though their methods inevitably drove them back to it against their will. There would be two ways in which this would happen, each of which is indicated in great detail throughout the whole writings of Athanasius; first, general considerations of what may be called philosophical theology, that no creature can have the supremacy over any other that the Arians ascribe to the Son, since compared with God, and even all His activities, all creatures are on the same level (with the exception of the paradoxical position of Man, inasmuch as he is a creature made in the image of God, but this does not affect the argument at all), so that they must finally degrade Him to the human level pure and simple; secondly, and even more important, any attempt to prove their case from Scripture would have the same result even more conclusively, since, as Athanasius proves to the hilt, all the passages

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(88) γινώσκοντες, ὅτι τὰ τοῦ Σαμοσατέως ἐκ φανεροῦ πάλιν φερόντων ἑαυτὰ

in which Christ is described in a creaturely way and which they could use with any plausibility, really refer to the incarnate life of Christ, which took place only eleven generations before the controversy. The passages that we have been discussing are by far the most definite that Athanasius wrote on the subject of Paul of Samosata. As regards later passages in the "Contra Arianos" I-III, in II: 43: 237C, Paul of Samosata is simply quoted, along with other heretics, simply as another example of a man who used the correct terminology but was in fact grossly heretical: "So Manichees and Phrygians, and the disciples of the Samosatene, though using the Names (sc. of the Persons in the Baptismal formula), nevertheless are heretics, and the Arians follow the same course, though they read the words of Scripture and use the Names (sc. in Baptism) . . ." No special connection between Paul of Samosata and Arius is indicated here, except that both, along with many other diverse men and groups, were heretics. There are two references to Paul of Samosata embedded in the great section in C. Ar. III on the Arian exegesis of the Synoptic passages. III: 26: 377A: "For behold, . . . while they hear and see τὰ ἀνθρώπινα of the Saviour in the Gospels, they have utterly forgotten, like the Samosatene, τῆς πατρικῆς θεότητος τοῦ Υἱοῦ (sc. - His Godhead which He possesses owing to being Homousios with the Father - Author) . . ." And at III: 51: beginning (a favourite passage of those who support the Samosatene aetiology of Arianism): "(After quoting Luke 2:52, Athanasius proceeds:) . . . since they stumble in it, we are compelled to ask them, like the Pharisees and the Sadduces, of Whom does Luke speak. And the case stands thus. Is Jesus Christ man, as all other men, or is He God bearing flesh?<sup>(89)</sup> If then He is a common (κοινός) man as the rest,<sup>(90)</sup> then let Him, as a man, advance;<sup>(91)</sup> this however is the

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(89) σὰρκα φερώων.

(90) κατὰ τοὺς ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους.

(91) ἔστω πάλιν ὡς ἀνθρώπος προκόπτον. i.e. let Him be a being that progresses by struggle.



sentiment of the Samosatene, which virtually (τῇ μὲν δυνάμει) indeed you entertain also, though you deny it, in name only (τῇ δὲ ὀνόματι μόνον), because of men." Here, Athanasius at least admits definitely that the Arians denied that their theology had any affinity to that of Paul of Samosata, and it would be arguable that what appears to be a denial of the sincerity of their repudiation is actually a rhetorical and hyperbolic way of denying its efficacy. Incidentally, the translation of Newman and Robertson, as cited here, is somewhat misleading, especially in modern English; a better one at the relevant point would be, "the dynamic of your theology is such as to carry you inevitably to Paulianism", after which Athanasius goes on to say or mean that the more their hearts are confronted with this, the more strenuously they deny it in public. It must be remembered that in these Synoptic passages Christ is presented as soundly and completely man; they do not afford the Arians the way of escape in the direction of a unique kind of creature that is afforded by, say, Philipp. 2:9-10 (without its context!) or Prov. 8:22 LXX; therefore, any Arian attempt to use them would commit them to Paul of Samosata far more immediately, and in a far crasser way, than their use of the other passages, and allowance should be made for this in interpretation of these two last extracts quoted from Athanasius.

The remaining references to Paul of Samosata in Athanasius do not really affect the issue. In Epist. ad Episcopos Aeg. et Lib. 4: 545B, Paul of Samosata is mentioned again, along with all the other great heretics, as a perverter of Scripture, without any special connection with Arianism; what is described as a denial of τῇ θεότητι affirmed in both Testaments, presumably means a denial that the Being Who was on earth as Jesus of Nazareth was

hypostatically the Present Logos. The reference in Hist. Arianorum 71 is a purely historical reference to the interconnexion among Paul, the Jewish party, and Queen Zenobia of Palmyra, alleged by Athanasius to be (but probably not) a Jewess and actually as well as allegedly a patron of the heresy, but the sole purpose of the reference is to contrast the sober and tolerant policy of Zenobia towards the orthodox party with the outrages and confiscations of the Arians under Constantius. In "De Synodis", the only references, apart from the definitive exposition of his position on the Homousion, are anathemas directed against his doctrine, as a species of Sabellianism, along with Marcellus of Ancyra, etc., by Arianizing synods or in Arian or suspect creeds: to wit, the concluding anathema in the creed of Theophronius (ch. 24), and the Fourth Anathema of the Macrostich (ch. 26). There are two references in the "Tomus ad Antiochenes", each dealing with the general condemnation of all the important heretics, including Sabellius, Paul of Samosata, Arius, the Gnostics, etc., at the Synod of Alexandria in 362; the motion is put, 3: PG XXVI 800A, and carried, 6: 804A. In Ep. ad Maximum 3, end; "Again, it was consistent that when He went about in a body (*συνεστῆς*) He should not hide what belonged to the Godhead, lest the Samosatene find an excuse to call Him man (*ἄνθρωπον*), as distinct in person from God the Logos (*ὁ ὢν ἁπλοῦς καὶ ὁ ὢν ἁπλοῦς*).". This, appropriately to the general subject-matter of the book, is a reversion to the purely Christological side of theology, and confirms the general picture of the theology of Paul of Samosata.

Thus, to summarise, the definite evidence in C. Ar. I-II is capable of controlling the interpretation of the other passages, but the reverse is not possible, and indeed, when all the extracts are taken together, it will be seen that they collectively corroborate



the impression conveyed by C. Ar. I: 38. It is clear that, in the main, when Athanasius speaks of the Arians as being virtually committed ultimately by their exegetical and other methods and principles to Paul of Samosata, he does not regard these developments as the revelation of the essential nature of Arianism, stripped of its mendacious outward appearance. Rather does he regard it as the culmination of what Marxists would describe as a genuine internal self-contradiction in Arianism, which is both caused by and is the supreme manifestation of its essential theological inviability, a self-contradiction that would be the last thing that the Arians would desire, the point at which Arianism pulls itself apart.

We should not be deceived by the incidental resemblance that we have already noted between the Paulianist heresy and the Two Wisdom doctrine of Asterius the Sophist, which Athanasius denounces in C. Ar. I:30-32, and II: 18-43 and elsewhere, the point at which the similarity between the two heresies is at its highest. The great difference is that of generality, and in spite of what has been called the scandal of particularity in connection with the Incarnation, this distinction is of supreme importance, especially to a Greek or a man influenced by Greek thought. To Paul of Samosata, the hypostatically distinct Christ was a man, but the whole point of the doctrine of Arius and all his followers, and this most definitely includes Asterius, is that this creature was not just a man, but far more general and universal than any man, or even humanity as a whole, whether considered as an arithmetical or as an integral sum, comparable only with creation (or the rest of it) as a whole, if that. It is the contradiction between ascribing this highest level of generality (under God the "Father")

to the Logos and the ruthless reduction of Him to the rank of creatures that makes the Arian theology impossible, on the side of philosophical theology. But even their use of Scripture, as described above, was a desperate attempt to do the impossible. In terms of Chalcedon, the Arians described the One Eternal Hypostasis of the Logos as a creature, which left no room for the other side of the picture, the Anhypostatic Humanity of Christ, which was yet enhypostatic by reason of the Logos and thus personally distinct from other men, and which in that way lived a personal and distinct life. On the other hand, this whole question of the enhypostatic humanity of Christ is the very thing that Paul of Samosata, with however perverse and unfortunate a result, was attempting to describe; in fact, Paulianism, in its traditional picture, can almost be said to be Chalcedon with the Hypostasis applied to the wrong Nature. And when this is clear, we can see another reason, which concerns not so much any one passage but the whole of Athanasius's anti-Arian theology and its structure and methodology, for the conclusion that neither Athanasius nor the Arians themselves considered Paul of Samosata as the ancestor of their heresy, and that these subjective opinions corresponded with the objective fact. The very fact that Athanasius has to spend five-sixths of Contra Arianos I-III in establishing the doctrine of the Humanity of Christ, in intensive detail and with the most exhaustive exegesis of Scripture, shows that it was not something with which the Arians were familiar. Gwatkin's statement that the Arians impartially abolished both the Deity and Humanity of Christ and substituted an idolatrous abomination, is completely true. An answer to Paul of Samosata would have consisted of C. Ar. I: 1-37, together perhaps with a fairly brief statement of



why Scriptural statements on Christ's Deity would have priority over the (as far as it went, correctly interpreted) statements on the Humanity of Christ. Thus, the evidence is overwhelming that, for Athanasius, for the Arians themselves, and in objective fact, the Samosatene type of theology, for all its odious faults, was not guilty of being a root or the root of Arianism, rather the reverse.

For the same reason, we must acquit the characteristic theology of Antioch as a whole of all direct and positive responsibility for Arianism, if by this we mean the sort of theology which in its one-sided form produced Paul of Samosata and others of his type, that is, which was concerned for the full and genuine historical humanity of Christ. Incidentally, of the other heretics mentioned by Alexander of Alexandria, loc. cit., Artemon or Artemas appears to have had the same sort of theology as Paul of Samosata, while Ebion, if an individual, was the eponymous originator of all Adoptionist Christology, and thus, in the early Antiochene heretical movement, Adoptionist or Humanitarian Christology is more significant than any Sabellian tendency, as we have suggested with Paul of Samosata. For the same reason, we must acquit also the later Antiochene theology of Eustathius (one of the greatest supporters of Nicaea, who rivals Athanasius in steadfastness, although at a lower level of theological soundness), Diodore, Theodoret, and Theodore of Mopsuestia, who were all rather more suspect, the lastnamed being condemned as a heretic in 553; and also the heretic Nestorius. This means therefore the whole movement that is known in Church history and tradition by the name of Antioch, whether in its orthodox, suspect, or overtly heretical form. On the question of Antiochene exegesis, we unfortunately have nothing definite concerning Lucian, but as for Theodore of Mopsuestia, he cannot be considered as

having, in even that respect, any real affinity with Arianism. The characteristic of this type of exegesis is its great caution, the antithesis of the over-free allegorical extraction of testimonia to Christ that was traditionally characteristic of Alexandria (but not of Athanasius, in its extreme and unnatural form). Such an exegete as Theodore was unwilling to strain the facts by attributing passages to Christ, if their prima facie meaning is within the human sphere. But this, perhaps excessive, insistence on giving human and other creaturely factors, pluralistically considered, their due, is quite different from the reckless Arian exegesis of passages which unquestionably refer to Christ, and which resembles nothing so much as the old Alexandrian exegetical method stood on its head. In its fanatical and monomaniacal insistence on the one creaturely Logos, Arianism is quite distinct from the cautious pluralism which is perhaps the most questionable element in Antiochene exegesis.<sup>(92)</sup>

Having considered the theology traditionally associated with Antioch, we must now consider the theology traditionally associated with the other great centre of Alexandria, by which we mean Origenism and the theology of his successors. Perhaps the antithesis has been too sharply drawn, in extrapolation from the later Christological conflict between the Nestorians and the Eutychians together with their orthodox predecessors like Cyril, which coincided with and exacerbated the traditional rivalry between the great Patriarchates. Later Origenism spread out to involve people like the Synod in Antioch that condemned Paul of Samosata, and such theologians as Eusebius of Caesarea, while such later Alexandrians as Peter and Alexander opposed

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(92) For an unfriendly account of the exegesis of Theodore in the context, see Newman "The Arians of the Fourth Century" 3rd ed. pp. 413-425; for a friendly account, Raven, "Apollinarianism", p. 281 ff.



him in many ways. A far stronger case can be made out for Origen as the ancestor of Arianism than for the heretic Paul of Samosata. Prestige describes Origen as "the father alike of Arian heresy and Nicene orthodoxy."<sup>(93)</sup> He repeatedly used expressions that, in the light of later experience, went to the limit of subordinationism in his emphasis on the personal distinctness of the Logos from the Father, and one fragment, if genuine, describes the Logos actually as *Κτίσμα*.<sup>(94)</sup> On the other hand, in spite of an anti-Origenist tradition that goes back to Epiphanius and Jerome, scholarship of all kinds is virtually unanimous in regarding him<sup>n</sup> as in fact innocent of heresy in this regard, an opinion in which the author concurs. On the one hand, Origen was fully aware of, without being able to solve, the difficulty with which Athanasius dealt in De Decr. 28-31 and C. Ar. I: 30-34, on the question of Two Unoriginales,<sup>(95)</sup> and on the other hand, he was trying to do full

(93) "God in Patristic Thought", p. 131.

(94) See Prestige, loc. cit.. Studies of Origen, with special reference to this question, are to be found in: Loofs, P R E (3rd ed.) Pt. II col. 9, Prestige, "God in Patristic Thought", pp. 132-138, where, in spite of appearances, Origen is to be exonerated; Atzberger, "Die Logos-lehre des heiligen Athanasius . . .", p. 24, where one potent factor in the origin of the Arian heresy is said to be the Origenist theology uncorrected by the intervention of Dionysius of Rome, as narrated by Athanasius, "De Sententia Dionysii", which, in spite of an a priori suspicion of Roman Catholic bias towards the Roman Episcopate, we have to allow as fair comment; Möhler - see above, no. 10 to this chapter; his subsequent comments on the Dionysii, op. cit. 96-100, are that the Alexandrian was trapped by the old confusion between creation and generation. Petavius, "De Trinitate", Bk. I ch. 4, in accordance with his general line, of which more below, is severely critical of Origen.

The incriminating examples that Loofs, perhaps one-sidedly quotes from Origen, are: The Logos is *Θεός* but not *ὁ αὐτὸς Θεός* (De Princ. 4:13), The Logos is *εἰκὼν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀλλ' οὐκ ὁ αὐτὸς ἀγαθός*, *ἡ δὲ δευτέρου οὐδὲς μετὰ τὸν Θεόν, τῶν ὅλων τιμὴς* (C. Cels. 7:57). The Logos is: *ex ipsa substantia Dei* (Comm. in Hebr.) but *ἐκ τοῦ θελήματος τοῦ πατρὸς γεννηθεὶς* (De Princ.).

(95) As Prestige points out, loc. cit. p. 138.



justice to such passages as Deut. 6:4 etc., Luke 18:19, John 5:19, 6:38, 7:16 and 28, 14:24 and 28, and others, the sort of passage which Athanasius had to treat in C. Ar. III:7 ff.. It is generally agreed that Origen's doctrine of pre-existent rational natures,<sup>(96)</sup> while it blurred the distinction between Creator and creature, at least saved him from the worst consequences of his language, whatever might have been the case with his successors, who did not have this particular doctrine. This of course would have made it more difficult to defend Eusebius of Caesarea, who used very similar language, of which his Letter to Euphrasion is the most celebrated example. There is surprisingly little study of the theology of Eusebius of Caesarea except in the direct context of Arianism, with perhaps unfortunate results for one who is probably best considered as ante-Nicene in theology.<sup>(97)</sup>

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- (96) This doctrine is propounded in De Principiis Book I: ch. 5, almost immediately after the Doctrine of the Trinity. These rational natures, which could pre-exist, were almost intermediate between God and creatures, and the case has normally been made that once this sort of cosmology was abandoned (see Robertson, *Introd.* xxv-xxvii), the whole system fell apart. Loofs, *loc. cit.* 9, 11. 20-26, puts it thus: "Diese Doppelseitigkeit des origenistischen Logosbegriffs war nur möglich, weil und solange die Logoslehre ein integrierender Teil war in einer dynamisch-emanantischen Konstruktion der ewigen immateriellen Welt. Fiel die Annahme der Ewigkeit der von Gott causierten immateriellen Welt - und die anti-origenistische Polemik sorgte dafür, dass diese Annahme bald als unerlaubt galt, einfach ernen Geisteren war sie ohnedies unvollziehbar - so musste die Logoslehre des Origenes auseinanderbrechen."
- (97) Apart from the writings cited here, the chief theological studies on Eusebius of Caesarea are: S. Lee's Introduction to the English translation of the "De Theophania", 1843; Prestige, "God in Patristic Thought" pp. 138-146. The former energetically defends him against accusations of heresy; the latter, also Anglican apparently, admits that he made statements verging on Arianism but was not really an Arian. Newman treats him as virtually heretical; he says, in contradiction to the evidence that we have collected above, that "Eusebius of Caesarea indeed he (Athanasius) did not favour" (*Select Treatises in Controversy with the Arians*, 1881, Vol. II (notes), p. 52), and all his references to Eusebius of Caesarea in his notes to the translations of the anti-Arian writings are similar accusations. Petavius, *De Trinitate*, Book I, ch. 11, gives an extremely unfavourable account. Möhler's account (*op. cit.* pp. 318-343) is

See also *De  
Trinitate*,  
Vol. II: 97-100



Dorner stated that the tendency appears to be for Eusebius to be supported by Anglicans and condemned by all others, whether Roman Catholics or Lutheran and Reformed.<sup>(98)</sup> and this has in general been the position, except that a recent Roman Catholic study, by Bardy, takes the Anglican type of view that he was very indiscreet but in his heart right.<sup>(99)</sup> Unfortunately, in the case of Dionysius of Alexandria, we have the famous extract from his Letter to Euphranor and Ammonius which is not only as *prima facie* Arian as anything could be, but could almost be the source of many of the most characteristic Arian slogans: (Athanasius, *De Sententia Dionysii* 4: PG XXV: 485A)

" 'the Son of God is a thing made and originate and not His own by nature, but in essence alien from the Father, just as the husbandman is from the vine, or the ship-builder from the boat, since, being a creature, He was not before He came to be.'<sup>(100)</sup> " Athanasius's treatment of this issue, including the hostile intervention of Dionysius of Rome and the reaction of Dionysius of Alexandria, is of great interest and will be discussed in full in due course, but the

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of great interest and (as an account by a leading Roman Catholic) does not fit into Dorner's scheme. He distinguishes sharply between the ante-Nicene period of Eusebius, in which he appears as virtually Arian (333) and the post-Nicene period, in which he was a great opponent of the heresy (336). This interpretation is over-generous to him, as it neglects his notorious association with Arians in the Marcellan controversy ten years or so after Nicaea. Möhler's final judgment is interesting, that the trouble with Eusebius of Caesarea is that he had no real sense either of the depth of human sin and misery, or of the wonder of grace (338-339).

- (98) "History of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ," E.T. Div. I Vol. II, p. 220; the whole section on Eusebius is on pp. 219-227, in which his conclusion is that he is indiscreet and suspect.
- (99) "La Théologie d'Eusèbe de Césarée d'après l'Histoire Ecclésiastique", in "Revue de l'Histoire Ecclésiastique," Vol. L (1955), pp. 5-21 (periodical published by the Catholic University of Louvain).
- (100) ποίημα καὶ γενητὸν εἶναι τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, μήτε δὲ φύσει ἴδιον, ἀλλὰ ξενὸν κατ' οὐσίαν αὐτὸν εἶναι τοῦ Πατρὸς. ὥσπερ ἐστὶν ὁ χειρὶς πρὸς τὴν ἀμπελον, καὶ ὁ ναυπηγὸς πρὸς τὸ σκάφος. καὶ γὰρ ὡς ποίημα ὢν, οὐκ ἦν πρὶν γενεῖται.



the author considers that even the efforts of Athanasius do not succeed in presenting the reaction of his predecessor as anything other than one of defeat and capitulation.<sup>(101)</sup>

As far as the reaction of Athanasius to this type of theology is concerned, there is a certain difficulty. Athanasius defends with great energy all the Alexandrian representatives of this tradition, Origen,<sup>(102)</sup> Theognostus,<sup>(103)</sup> Dionysius<sup>(104)</sup> particularly, but it is possible to devalue his testimony on the ground that Athanasius, as an Alexandrian, is not a disinterested witness. The test case with Athanasius is undoubtedly Eusebius of Caesarea, who may have been an Origenist, but whose episcopal see was a considerable rival of Alexandria, who had fellow-travelled with other rivals in the interests of Arians against Athanasius's own friends and the Nicene theology, and who had made himself, at a late stage in his life at a stage which actually left him no time for a regular reconciliation, a personal enemy of Athanasius. Yet, as we have seen, Athanasius in his mature theology repeatedly and regularly defends him against the charges of Arianism, or rather against Arian attempts to use him as an authority.<sup>(105)</sup> What is more, in his sections on the *ἀγένητον*, De Decr. 28: 31 and C. Ar. I: 30-34, where the issue that upset Eusebius of Caesarea and all the Origenists is treated, Athanasius, as already noted, is more temperate than anywhere else in his writings, especially in the latter,

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(101) This will be further discussed in our detailed analysis of the "De Sententia Dionysii". See also Robertson's introduction to it.

(102) See De Decr. 27, where Origen described as *ἐκκλησιαστικός*, is quoted as an authority for Nicaea.

(103) See De Decr. 25: 460B-C, where Theognostus is cited for similar purposes.

(104) See De Decr. 25: 461A-B, where Dionysius of Alexandria is cited for similar purposes, also De Sent. Dion. 14-26.

(105) See above pp. 265-8.



and later, passage, as if he can see that here was a real difficulty, which can only be solved by a new and apparently paradoxical separation of what in the Godhead are analogous to the temporal and ontological priority that always go together in ordinary causality.<sup>(106)</sup> Eusebius of Caesarea can be blamed for not trying to grasp this, but nothing more. The only thing that remains to be said about him is that he actually does not respond, in spite of his suspect statements, to the most definitive test for Arianism; the exegesis of Prov. 8:22 LXX. Any principal in the Arian party would have seized the opportunity with both hands. Eusebius, on the other hand, almost alone in his day, takes the trouble to point out the erroneous LXX translation of the Hebrew, and, like any modern exegete, bases his interpretation on the Hebrew, which is actually opposed to Arianism. He must be allowed the credit for this, even though he is doing it to oppose the exegesis of Marcellus of Ancyra, who referred Prov. 8:22, of which he accepted the LXX version, to the humanity of Christ, presumably to pave the way for his Sabellian doctrine.<sup>(107)</sup> This exegesis was followed enthusiastically, for different motives, by Athanasius, C. Ar. II: 44-82. The best conclusion is that Eusebius of Caesarea was considered by Athanasius to be, and actually was, a man who sailed dangerously close to the wind in his opposition to Sabellianism, but he was no Arian, and recoiled from Arianism whenever it really mattered. Certainly, he was not a principal in the Arian party, and the last word that can be applied to him is "Ariomaniac."<sup>(108)</sup> Finally, when we come to Athanasius's treatment of

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(106) See above pp. 300-306

(107) For both Exegeses, see Eusebius, C. Marcell. II: 3, and Eccl. Theol. III: 2-3.

(108) See above, p. 265-8. For the term "Ariomaniac", see Newman on De Syn: 13.

the last successors of Origenism, the Semi-Arians - whether or not we accept the theory of Zahn<sup>(109)</sup> and Harnack<sup>(110)</sup> that they set the tone for the definitive settlement - the same applies here too, by general agreement. Although much of what is often taken as Athanasius's conciliatory gestures towards this party, in "De Synodis", is in reality a stern warning, however polite and fraternal, not to become entangled with the Arians or Arian ways of thought, the significant fact here is not this, but the fact that Athanasius thought it worth while to give such a warning and to differentiate between them and the Arians, whose case, barring complete repentance, was hopeless.<sup>(111)</sup> To summarise, Athanasius clearly differentiated in his own mind between the Origenist type of theology in all its ramifications, and Arianism, and however much we can suspect excessive interest in the prestige of the diocese or Catechetical School of Alexandria, he honestly did not regard even degenerate Origenism as a direct and positive ancestor of Arianism any more than he regarded Paulianism. And this should stand as our verdict, especially as it concerns Eusebius of Caesarea.

Having disposed of the two main streams of contemporary theology as direct ancestors of Arianism, we must now consider other things that have been so accused, and next on the list is the idea that Arianism is the result of the plain man's exegesis of Scripture, without the control of *Sine Scriptura Traditio*, an independent notion of "piety", etc. This is maintained by Newman, virtually *passim*, and Roman Catholic scholarship generally, for obvious reasons.<sup>(112)</sup> In

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(109) "Marcellus von Ancyra," p. 23 ff. and p. 87 ff.

(110) "History of Dogma", E.T. Vol. IV, 80 ff.

(111) See De Synodis 33-54. The issue will be fully discussed in our study of this work.

(112) See above, p.332. See also notes on De Decr. 7, C. Ar. I: 37, II: 1, 5, 34, 35, 44, 72; III: 18, 58; and De Syn 23; also, in Vol. II of "Select Treatises. . .", 1881 ed., notes on Rule of Faith (250-253). Authority of Scripture (261-265), Tradition (311-314), *Εὐαγγέλιον* (410-411). See also Möhler, *op.cit.* 116 note, and 366.



the form in which the question was treated in Newman, we find it associated with the fact that Lucian, whom Newman considers to be in a peculiarly close relation to Arius, was one of the first great Biblical critics and exegetes, and the presumption - for, in the absence of any positive knowledge of Lucian's exegesis, it can be no more - that he followed the sort of cautious, literalistic methods associated with his known successors like Theodore of Mopsuestia. By implication, this is an attack, not only on nineteenth-century Biblical criticism, but on the whole Protestant principle of the supremacy of Scripture over tradition. We have already touched on this matter, and our remarks above on the full humanity of Christ are relevant here, since this Antiochene characteristic goes together with their sense of the latter. There is no better answer to the idea that Arianism is the natural result of the plain unvarnished exegesis of Scripture than the Arian exegesis of Philipp. 2: 9-10, particularly, and similar passages, which we have already cited above from C. Ar. I: 38, in the case of the famous Philippian passage.<sup>(113)</sup> Here, the Arian exegesis could only be the result of a crass overlooking or deliberate neglect of the context, in this case Philipp. 2: 5-11 as a whole, which makes it clear that the whole passage must refer to the incarnate life of Jesus Christ, which took place only eleven generations before and had its own immemorial B.C., and not to His hypothetical creation before the rest of the world, and therefore that the event referred to in Philipp. 2: 9-10 must be basically connected with the Resurrection. The interpretation of Philipp. 2: 9-10 as applying to a hypothetically pre-mundane creation and establishment of a creaturely Logos-Son is not an exegetical variant;

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<sup>(113)</sup> See above, p.369.

it is exegetical insanity, and to attribute this in any way to Lucian, say, is simply an insult to what was, by common consent, a great and intelligent school of Biblical studies. As far as "Antioch" in general was concerned, Athanasius himself, by his statements, implied that anyone who adopted Antiochene principles and who had a predisposition to heresy would go straight back to Paul of Samosata, or perhaps Ebion. The same applies to the other passages which Athanasius discusses in C. Ar. I: 37- II: 18. Even worse are the exegeses of Asterius the Sophist of I Cor. 1:24, and John 14: 10 , which we have already cited and concerning which we have said enough; the former is an even worse case of ignoring the context, and the latter violates the whole form and meaning of the original. None of this can belong to any school of exegesis worthy of the name whatever. And finally, let us look at another specimen of Arian interpretation of Scripture, what is beyond all doubt the worst exegesis in all history, which is also of interest in that it was perpetrated by Athanasius of Anazarba, generally reputed to be a Lucianist: (De Syn. 17: 712B) "For, writing to Alexander the bishop, he had the impudence to say, 'Why complain against Arius and his fellows for saying that the Son of God ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων κτίσμα πένοντα, and is ἐν ᾧ πάντων? For everything that has been made is represented in the parable by the hundred sheep, and the Son is one of these. Therefore, if the hundred sheep are not creatures or originate beings, or if there is something besides the hundred, then let the Son not be a creature, or one amongst everything. But if the hundred are all originate beings and there exists nothing besides the hundred save God alone, what absurdity do the Arians utter when, comprehending Christ among the hundred, they say that He is one among others?' ". What could have induced an Arian to perpetrate this fantastic nonsense? In the first place, it is the most astounding direct contradiction of John 10: 11, and in fact the whole of John 10: 1-18, which cannot be



excused on the non-existent ground of any dispute about canonicity. With reference to the verse even more directly involved, Matt. 18:12 = Luke 15:4, the contradiction is not quite so blatant, but is in all conscience bad enough. Perhaps the thing most clearly shown by the great Patriarch's namesake is a complete lack of feeling for soteriology, which is so obvious when one compares his exegesis with the Scriptural originals that further comment would be pointless and unnecessary. This is positive confirmation of what is otherwise largely an argument from silence, that the Arians had no direct soteriological interest at all, and that any soteriology would have to be indirect and concealed. The exegesis is really so bad that the best that can be said for it is that it is an arrant case of *petitio principii*, of assuming what has to be proved, that the Son was actually on the creaturely side, the side of the hundred sheep, in the first place, although how this assumption could be made in the face of Scripture passes all comprehension. The worst is that this argument is a sinister precursor of one of the great modern arguments for, not Arianism, but atheism pure and simple, that is, the idea that if God exists, He must be the Ground and Creator of all things that exist, but once God is postulated He must be reckoned among the "all things" that exist; therefore, a vicious infinite regress follows, so that the apocryphal child who asked his Sunday school teacher, "Who made God?" showed great philosophical acumen. Incidentally, Athanasius not only understood this point, but saw its final result. He repeatedly says that if "all things" are created through the Logos, the word "all things", normally  $\tauὰ \piάντα$ , cannot be interpreted in such a way as to include the Logos.<sup>(114)</sup> And he also says again and again

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(114) See De Decr. 30 init., C. Ar. I: 19: 52C, 33: 80A-B, II: 22: 193B, II: 24: 197B-C, see also II: 49 and II: 63-64 on the related questions of  $\epsilonἰς ὅτι$  and  $\πρωτοτοκος πλὴν κτιστος$  respectively.

that the way that the Arians are going they will have to deny the Father as well as the Son, not in the sense of denying His Paternity, but His Deity, because they would have to say the same things about the Father as about the Son. This is a specially serious case of the truth that, while the ostensible arguments of Arianism, including its exegesis, really prove Paulianism, the real bases of Arian thought are ultimately atheistic, in the full modern sense. It is our melancholy privilege to hear with our own ears how amply Athanasius's own worst fears have been realised. In conclusion, Arian exegesis, at any rate as presented in Athanasius, is not the result of a regular critical or hermeneutic principle, but is something that can fairly be described as the desperate last throw of a gambler who is trying to prove from Scripture something that he already believes on other grounds; that is, a belief, accepted blindly, that the Logos must be a creature. Even the cases in which the Arians had a case, the subordinationist passages in the Fourth Gospel, for example, and especially Prov. 8:22 LXX, do not affect our judgment. We shall consider later, in the context of Arian theology, the Arian principle of exegesis, such as it was, as well as Athanasius's refutation of it. But <sup>if</sup> it resembled anything at all in its own environment, it was in fact Alexandrian exegesis at its most extreme, stood on its head.

Similarly, Arianism cannot be considered to be a Scriptural heresy in another sense, that is, it does not concern canonicity or the limits of the Canon. Analysis of the exegetical sections of Athanasius's anti-Arian writings shows that this question never arose; the only possible disagreement, of which there is no sign in fact, would have been with the Book of Revelation. With this possible exception, all parties used the same passages of Scripture, there was no



disagreement on the text, even Prov. 8:22 LXX, and the texts came from a selection of Scripture that was quite representative of the whole, that is, everything relevant to Christ, Synoptic Gospels, Johannine writings, Acts, Pauline Epistles, Psalms, and other Scripture. There is nothing corresponding to the Marcionites' restriction of Canonical Scripture to a mutilated version of St. Luke's Gospel and ten Pauline Epistles, or the rejection by the Alogi of the Fourth Gospel. Similarly, there is nothing in Athanasius corresponding to the long sections of the "Adversus Haereses" of Irenaeus, in which the canonicity of various Books is maintained. Nor is there, with the exception of one citation by Athanasius from the "Shepherd" of Hermas,<sup>(115)</sup> any use of books that are not in Scripture or even which are in the Apocrypha on the Protestant reckoning, unless, in the case of Baruch, the Song of the Three Holy Children and the History of Susanna, which Athanasius regarded as canonical, they had a special connection with books of the Hebrew Old Testament.<sup>(116)</sup>

We now turn to non-Christian influences, of which the first and foremost is Judaism, because of its special relation to Christianity. Supporters of the Antiochene theory of the aetiology of Arianism have always found a considerable place for Judaism, on the ground of its great strength in Mesopotamia and the better relations between Jews and Christians throughout the region than in Alexandria, where the

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(115) A citation of an Arian citation on the unity of God, in De Decr. 18, and Ad Afros 5; in the former place he denies that the work is canonical, and says that he is simply attacking the Arians on their own ground.

(116) For Athanasius's list of Canonical Scripture, see Festal Letter XXXIX (367). Baruch is specifically described as, including Baruch 6, accompanying Jeremiah; The Song of the Three Holy Children forms part of Daniel 3, with which book the History of Susanna is also connected.



Jewish Politeuma was permanently antagonistic.<sup>(117)</sup> But, although a strong case can be apparently made out, it loses its cogency on closer inspection. There is no real evidence for direct Jewish influence, as if Arianism were a sort of American Inter-Faith Committee that took itself a bit too seriously. The treatment of the Arian heresy by Athanasius is quite different from, say, the treatment of the "foolish Galatians" by St. Paul; Moses and the Law, as well as all the great canonical figures, are treated as faithful witnesses to the Coming Christ, and where the Law is treated as being inferior to the Gospel by Athanasius, the point is not that there was any Arian disagreement on this point; the point was whether the supremacy of the Gospel went so far as to be due to the supremacy of the direct and proper Act of God over its prototypical shadow given by angels.<sup>(118)</sup> Conversely, when Athanasius denounces the Arians as Judaizers, the typical Jew to whom he refers is normally, the Sadducees, those cynics whom Christ refuted out of the Old Testament, and Caiaphas, in whom Jewry apostasised from its Lord.<sup>(119)</sup> Concerning the Arian position proper, no simple

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(117) See again, for instance, Raven, "Apollinarianism," pp. 41-72. Much of what we have said about the theological connection of Arianism with Paul of Samosata also applies here, since, of all later Christian heresies, Paulianism is the closest approach to the way in which Judaism would have treated Christ, if they had had anything to do with Him - and, for that matter, the way the Mohammedans actually did later. Several of the extracts cited above about Paul of Samosata couple *οἱ νόμοι* with him. On the other hand, Athanasius usually means something extra when he refers to Jews in this context; not only as the ignorers vincibly or invincibly, of the Lord, but as His crucifiers. The critics who emphasise Judaism as a factor are normally those who attach great importance to Antioch.

(118) C. Ar. I: 53-64, esp. 55.

(119) See De Decr. 1 and 2, De Sent. Dion. 3, C. Ar. I: 8, 38; II: 1; III: 27-28, esp. 28, where Arianism is described as "Judaic after the mind of Judas".

Although Athanasius is always careful to distinguish between these two senses of Judaism, his writings do leave an impression until of anti-Judaism which recalls nothing in the world quite so much as the charge of "Jewish Bolshevism", which was a widely-held impression until



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Judaizers after the Galatian fashion would have used the New Testament so extensively, or for that matter the Old Testament so little, as the Arians. Nor would simple Judaizers have used the Logos doctrine in such a cosmological way as the Arians, since this doctrine, whatever its Philonic origins, was by now thoroughly domiciled for better or worse in the Church. (Incidentally, have not modern Johannine and other scholars said far too much about this man? The author has yet to see any important reference to him, for good or ill, in any Patristic writing.<sup>(120)</sup>) Even if we remember his ostentatious monotheism, subordinationism, and non-Trinitarianism, he did not emphasise these in the Arian way, being in spirit if not in letter much closer to Origen and Eusebius of Caesarea than to Arius.<sup>(121)</sup>

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the ravings and massacres of Hitler made it untenable in any other quarter. What was the factual basis of the charge in each case? It is difficult to examine the latter objectively, but it is probably true that Jews did show a significantly greater tendency to become Marxist than Gentiles, if other things were equal and comparison was made within the same social group. On the other hand, the difference, once these controls are kept in mind, is no greater than what would be inevitable because of the traditional minority status of the Jews, and particularly of their almost theological tendency to be, under conditions of Christendom, everything that the rest of the community is not, e.g. the financiers in the feudal Middle Ages. Anti-Judaism is visibly developing in the Soviet para-theological Establishment. As far as we can read the scanty evidence, the same sort of thing may have happened in the fourth century. But there is nothing in Athanasius that amounts to a firm statement of any connection between Judaism and Arianism; least of all, as we have said, Hist. Arian. 71. Athanasius probably felt a connection which may or may not have gone beyond a simple feeling for analogy between Arius and Caiaphas.

(120) See Prestige, "God in Patristic Thought", p. 124, where it is pointed out that he is not mentioned once in the Apostolic Fathers, and only once in the Apologists - by Tatian, the least respectable of them.

(121) For Philo, see article "Logos etc." in Kittel's "Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament", p. 86 ff. and Bibliography appended to the article.



and the final general point is even more important; if the Arians were in any way under Judaistic influence, why is not the theology of God the Father more prominent, even if it is purely an apophatic theology? From the treatment of Arianism by Athanasius in the "Contra Arianos" I-III and elsewhere, it does not look as if Athanasius is answering either a positive or a negative theology of God the Father or of a Unitarian God. Of course, the Arians did say that God had such a character that He could not have direct intercourse with the world to be created,<sup>(122)</sup> although this was perhaps more characteristic of Asterius than of Arius himself; this argument was answered with great vigour by Athanasius. For the rest, it was not a case even of the Arians saying too little of the Father through mistaken awe; it was rather that they said far too much of the wrong stuff about the Son. Athanasius repeatedly says that the Arians said even what they did say about the Father, not to honour the Father, but to dishonour the Son,<sup>(123)</sup> and, whatever we might think of this sort of statement, the very fact that Greek theology, in spite of the Arian controversy, still remained weak on the doctrine of the Father,<sup>(124)</sup> is the best possible proof that Athanasius was not confronted with a genuine theology of the First Person.

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(122) See C. Ar. II: 24 apud finem, also De Decr. 8 init; the argument is answered in the succeeding chapters.

(123) See expressly De. Decr. 29: 469D and C. Ar. I: 80C, but this sentiment is implied in the entire anti-Arian writings of Athanasius.

(124) The statement of McIntyre to this effect, Scottish Journal of Theology, VII (1954), p. 359, is evidently meant to apply particularly to Athanasius and the Cappadocians (and other post-Nicene Fathers), since it occurs in the course of a paper on the Holy Spirit in those Fathers.



The next pair of factors that have been incriminated as fairly direct causes of Arianism are Aristotelianism and Platonism. The former charge is fairly general, particularly amongst Roman Catholic theologians and also Harnack;<sup>(125)</sup> the latter is rather subsidiary.<sup>(126)</sup> As to the former, it is undoubtedly true that Gregory of Nyssa, PG XLV: 265D, and Socrates, Eccl. Hist. II: 35: 6, complained of the syllogistic technique, manifested in a peculiarly aggressive way, of the later Arians. But however much this may apply to Aëtius and Eunomius, etc.,

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(125) Newman and Harnack have already been cited; in addition, Aristotle figures prominently in the list of causes of Arianism in Loofs: PRE (3rd ed.) Pt. II. p. 10, 1.25, which is a rather pointless remark about "Aristotelian aseity" on the grounds of the Arian use of the *ἀγέννητος* (are not aseity and ultimacy characteristics of God anyway?); Atzberger, op. cit. 29-30, postulates rationalism of the Aristotelian type as one likely factor, it becoming the principal factor pp. 62-64; Lauchert, "Leben des Ath. des Grossen", pp. 20-21, blames both elements equally in the usual senses.

(126) See also below mox. Le Bachelet, "Dictionnaire de Theologie catholique", I: col. 1790, criticises the Aristotelian theory as found in, say, Newman, and then quotes Platonism of the variety found in the "Timaeus" and Philo; he concludes (1791): "Ainsi l'hérésie arienne est un syncrétisme où se rencontrent, revêtus de la dialectique aristotélienne, des éléments de provenance diverse, surtout philoniens, origénistes et lucianistes. Mais, comme on en a fait souvent la remarque, les origines de l'arianisme sont avant tout philosophiques." Harnack, Hist. Dogm. E.T. Vol. IV, p. 48, comes to a similar conclusion: "In both cases (sc. Arius and Athanasius) the combined Logos doctrine of Philo and Origen was the disturbing element." Atzberger, op. cit. pp. 24-26, incriminates what he refers to as Philonism and Neo-Platonism on account of their demand for a subordinate "creator". Two centuries before, Petavius, De Trinitate, Lib. I cap. 1, was very severe on Platonism, far more so from this point of view than on any other non-Christian force; the others were treated in the remainder of ch. 1 and ch. 2. For Möhler, see above. If any pattern is to be discerned here, it is that Roman Catholic opinion, during the last century, has tended to swing away from a marked anti-Aristotelian bias towards the incrimination of the tradition which, as is held, involved the Plato of the "Timaeus", Philo, Origen, the Neo-Platonists, and "Alexandria" in general. The writer is not competent to speak about Möhler, but Newman certainly retained his interest in Alexandria from his pre-Roman days, and was temperamentally always more sympathetic to its outlook than to the later Aristotelianism and Thomism. On the contrary, it is highly probable that the subsequent change in Roman Catholic thought is part of the general Thomist revival which was sanctioned by the Encyclical of 1879.



the style and content of the earlier Arian writings does not specially show such a logical technique in a special way, any more than the arguments of Athanasius; they were mainly assertive, and where they are argumentative, the arguments are in apparent form no more "logical" and no less literary than those of Athanasius and other opponents, when allowance is made for the greater brevity and conciseness of the Arian survivals, which are after all embedded as quotations in the writings of the orthodox theologians, which have survived complete and which therefore would appear to be more literary and diffuse even if this had not been actually the case. The value of these charges of Aristotelianism is seriously diminished by the fact that there is only one case known to the author in which the charge of being unduly influenced by non-Christian ways of thought has ever been made, and substantiated, against an individual - by Athanasius against Asterius.<sup>(127)</sup>

The later Arians may have shown their syllogistic and argumentative technique too prominently - since when has there been any genuine argumentation, as distinct from assertion or affirmation, that has had any other appearance? Even the theological arguments about God Who "non est in genere aliquo" must have some analogical resemblance to ordinary logical arguments - but there is no firm evidence that they ever learned anything material outside the Christian (or early Arian, in the case of the later Arians) tradition as it was understood in their youth; this is the terrible thing about them. As for Platonism as a cause of Arianism, the most that its detractors do is

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(127) See the references to *ὁ ὁσας Ἀστέριος* collated above, p.256-8; that is, that Asterius had sacrificed during the Persecution of Diocletian, and could not be a clergyman; the insinuation is that he overdeveloped the scholastic side of his nature in compensation. However, with Arian connivance, he taught as if he were ordained. See also above, pp.260-1 and 263, and Athanasius, De Synodis 18.



to refer to the sort of subordinationist Demiurge doctrine in the "Timaeus", or to the unitarian element in Neo-Platonism. But the former is, if the "Timaeus" is a genuine work of Plato, on the very periphery of his philosophical system,<sup>(128)</sup> and, owing to the complexity of all issues concerning Plato's philosophy, it is better to consider the contrast between Platonism and Aristotelianism with the former considered as a virtue of Athanasius rather than as a vice of Arianism.

The Roman Catholic Atzberger makes this contrast most clearly, even though it is fairly generally recognised, when he talks about the "platonisch-intuitiv" method, which was accepted by Athanasius and the whole Alexandrian school, in contrast with the "supraaristotelische" rational argumentation of the Arians.<sup>(129)</sup> Unfortunately, the issue is not nearly as simple as all that, as Atzberger realises in the tantalizingly brief statement that, to complicate the general picture, the Arians had many Platonic elements, and their opponents,

(128) The "Timaeus" is far more Pythagorean, or perhaps Orphic-Pythagorean, than any other philosophical passages in Plato, except that the passages on the Number that controls sound reproduction in "Republic" Books ~~IX~~ <sup>IX, X, XI</sup>, are very similar. On the other hand, the Platonic Socrates was always interested in mathematics, and the mythical passages in such works as "Phaedo" are another point of resemblance to the "Timaeus" which makes it difficult to dismiss it as non-Platonic. Perhaps any attempt to treat cosmogony must be in that sort of terms.

(129) Op. cit., 62-64, where Atzberger points out, most wisely and necessarily, that the Arians and Athanasius worked from exactly the same materials, and maintains, less soundly, that the contrast was that the Arians worked "durch eine formale Dialektik und logisch-reflektierende Verstandesoperation" and Athanasius "durch eine ontologisch-intuitive Spekulation" (62-63); later, (64), the same contrast is repeated, with Athanasius trying to get the right doctrine "durch eine (platonische) Intuition," while Arius failed "durch eine (supraaristotelische) Verstandes-reflexion". He feels that Athanasius would have done better to attack the wrong method at once rather than its results only, and also to argue more directly from the right "Begriff" of the Trinity, which essence, being God, would have implied existence.



Aristotelian.<sup>(130)</sup> The author is convinced, in the first place, that this contrast, as one between Plato and Aristotle is, at the very best, a gross over-simplification, and at any lower level, an error. If the intended contrast is between Faith, in whatever is taken to be its right relation to reason, and Reason which arrogates to itself what belongs to faith, this contrast can be understood only on a Christian basis, whether we adopt the Reformed, Roman Catholic, or any other Christian conception of the relation between faith and reason; therefore, it is best to keep Plato out of the argument. The process of intellection which, for Plato, was the way of knowing the Forms, or in the case of the monistic and dialectical sections of the "Republic", the (One Supreme) Form of the Good, is quite different from faith in any Christian sense. But even if we accept intuition in its more general sense as being a correct description even of Alexandria's theological method, it is far more like what is later found in, say, the Descartes of the Third Meditation than anything in Plato. A better, though still most inaccurate version of the same contrast between Plato and Aristotle is to regard Platonism as concentration on the one thing, or at most few things, of ultimate importance, on the principle that all the rest will look after themselves on this basis, and Aristotelianism as preliminary intensive study of the many small things on the principle that the one great thing or the few great

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(130) Op. cit. p. 30: "Es findet sich bei den Arianern auch sehr viele platonische Elemente, und bei ihren Gegnern aristotelischen." One may make the unkind remark that this was a prize essay of a young priest published in 1880, the year after the Encyclical mentioned above, n. 126. But the statement contains an important truth that, incredibly, nobody to the author's knowledge has developed any further!

things will emerge by observation and generalisation. This is almost true as far as it concerns Aristotle, although he was by no means lacking in metaphysical interest. This fits in with the fact that his natural theology is, to such a great extent, of what we have called the objective kind, natural theology thus constituting an exception that manifestly proves the rule. But with Plato the case is much more complex. The Theory of Forms in the Platonic Socrates is pluralistic compared with most previous systems, and he was likewise concerned far more with the details of things as concerns of philosophy; the later Plato, for all his concern with Eleaticism, felt it as an enemy rather than as an immoderate friend, and in his final refutation of it, in the "Sophist", moved very close to the sort of logical position later associated with Aristotle, though still regarding the Forms as primary and still relatively lacking in the observational and analytical interest of Aristotle.<sup>(131)</sup> But the correct contrast, in terms of Greek thought, is probably between the whole of the earlier (and Stoic and Neo-Platonic) Greek tradition, with its desire for unity and ultimacy, and the analytic element that later attained its definitive expression in Aristotle. The best expression of this distinction would actually be outside the field of classical philosophy altogether, between, to choose modern examples, Hegel and, say, Francis Bacon. Nevertheless, in spite of its inaccuracy, this is the best way to understand the contrast that most commentators have in mind when they talk in terms of the antithesis between Plato and Aristotle. Of course, the main practical objection to this interpretation of the antithesis is that

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(131) The "Parmenides" Pt. II and "Sophist" can be understood as being together a refutation of Eleaticism - In Soph. 247-248, the point is actually made that philosophy must account for a plurality of changing things.



it is completely exhaustive even if it is interpreted in such a way as to be not exclusive, and this would involve describing such a theologian as Karl Barth as a Platonist in virtue of his Christocentricity, even though it has no real connection with anything attributable to Plato at any stage of Plato's career.

What therefore would be, on this basis, the characteristics of Platonic and Aristotelian theology? To take the latter first, it is easy to recognise Thomas Aquinas as an Aristotelian, as far as a Christian could be - and the absolute supremacy of God imposes certain severe limitations. This is shown by the extraordinary detail with which he treats theological questions, and especially those concerning ethics, and also by his emphasis on natural theology being of the objective kind. Following on from him, the topical method, with its almost unlimited subdivisions, which has become traditional in all Western theology, is an unmistakably Aristotelian characteristic. The same would have to be said for Western tradition, this time supremely developed in Protestantism, of careful, detailed textual exegesis of Scripture without any a priori whatever - the textual sermon of caricature, at its worst. Essentially the same would apply to Antiochene exegesis, as far as we know it. On the other hand, as we have already said, for the sake of argument Karl Barth would have to be called a Platonist, since he believes fervently in the unity of theology, and one main reason for the inordinate length of the "Church Dogmatics" is his attempt to combine the unitary principle with the traditional topical method. Athanasius is an even clearer example of the unitary, or "Platonist" tradition in theology. So is, whatever, else we think of it, traditional Alexandrian exegesis, which finds Christ in the most unlikely places by the typological method. Where

do the Arians stand in this comparison? As we have already said, they did not learn their exegesis, with its blatant ignoring of such an elementary feature as the context, from Antioch. Nor did they learn any such slovenly procedure from Aristotle. Athanasius, as we shall see, is in this way far closer to both Antioch and to Aristotle than Arianism, whether in the persons of Arius or Asterius or even Eunomius ever got. And as we shall see later, their concentration on the one proposition, that the Logos is a creature, verges on monomania. There may be an implicit Christology or an implicit soteriology in Arianism, but these other elements are far more utterly subordinated to the centre than they are even in Athanasius, who is generally recognised as being a theologian to whom the unitary principle applies, - both statements are true regardless of the almost limitless disagreement among scholars as to the precise unifying principle. The only valid description of Arianism, in the terms of this discussion, is that it follows the principle of Platonism, stood on its head<sup>(132)</sup> - which is something quite different from Aristotelianism; one must not be deceived by the common emphasis on creaturely reality which results in each case.

On the other hand, the one important part of theology for the Arians was meant to be precisely a statement about creaturely life! Our description of Arianism as Platonism standing on its head is still meant to exclude any direct influence of Neo-Platonism in its monistic tendencies. The extract from Athanasius De Decr. 28: 468B, which we have already cited, is proof against this; at any rate, if Athanasius can say that the Neo-Platonists could apply the term  $\lambda\chi\epsilon\nu\eta\tau\omicron\nu$  not only

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(132) If this recalls the well-known statement, in the opposite sense, of Marx that in Hegel he found truth standing on its head and was going to put it right, the resemblance is intentional.



to their first principle but to the next two derived principles in order, on what must have been something like Athanasius's principle that Unorigination (that is, in this case, co-ultimacy) in another sense could be the common possession of an ontologically ultimate and derived principle, <sup>this</sup> is at least sufficient sign that the Neo-Platonists were ambiguous enough to enable Athanasius to make out a case. Newman's note on this passage is as follows: "Montfaucon quotes a passage from Plato's 'Phaedrus' in which the human soul is called 'unoriginate and immortal' (246A), but Athanasius is referring to another subject, the Eclectic Trinity. Thus, Theodoret; 'Plotinus and Numenius, explaining the sense of Plato, say that he taught three principles beyond time and eternal, Good, the Intellect, and the Soul of All.' De Affect. Cur. 2: 750. And so Plotinus himself, 'It is as if one were to place the Good as the centre, Intellect like an immovable circle around, and Soul a movable circle, and movable by appetite.' Fourth Ennead IV C 16. Vid. Porphyry in Cyril, Cont. Julian, viii tom. ult. p. 271 & ibid. p. 32, and also Plotinus, Third Ennead V, 2 and 3. Athanasius's testimony that the Platonists considered their three  $\sigma\upsilon\nu\omicron\delta\epsilon\tau\alpha\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  all unoriginate is perhaps a singular one. In Fifth Ennead IV 1, Plotinus says what seems contrary to it,  $\eta\delta\epsilon\grave{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta\grave{\alpha}\chi\epsilon\nu\eta\tau\omicron\varsigma$ , speaking of  $\tau\acute{\alpha}\mu\omicron\upsilon\theta\acute{\omicron}\nu$ . Yet Plato, quoted by Theodoret, ibid. p. 749, speaks of  $\epsilon\iota\tau\epsilon\grave{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta\nu\epsilon\iota\tau\epsilon\grave{\alpha}\rho\chi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ ." In this note, "Eclectic" always means "Neo-Platonic".

This suggests that it was either true, or a widespread interpretation of their teaching, that the Neo-Platonists differentiated sharply between the relation of their second and third principles to the Origin, which they conceived on more or less emanationist lines, and the relation of the lower world to these three, and it is on this point that the Arians were in most pointed disagreement with them, since the great feature of Arianism was the assimilation of the relation between Father and Son to that between God and the world. A similar point may be made about any notion of a direct relation between Gnosticism and

Arianism. There are certain possible reminiscences, e.g. Arius's statement in the "Thalia" that the Son does not even know his own essence, may recall the remark of the Gnostic Marcus that the Logos was pronounced in four parts containing 4, 4, 10 and 12 letters consecutively, total 30, so that no part knew either its own origin or anything about the other parts.<sup>(133)</sup> And the statements of Asterius about the world not being able to endure the direct hand of God are even more directly Gnostic in reminiscence, in the same way that the tendency of Neo-Platonism (as compared with, say, Stoicism) to remove God to a lonely eminence would have encouraged certain elements in Arian thought. But the general tenor of Gnosticism is to postulate the emanation of entities from the original god which contained deity in a more and more impure form until one had reached an entity which could do such a base job as creation. This was the very thing that the Arians denied, perhaps deliberately denied. Even Asterius, and above all Asterius, was at great pains to show that the very first stage in any analogous process was a pure creature, that there was no intermediate entity between God and creatures.

Incidentally, every form of unitarianism, which would include Judaism, Neo-Platonism, etc., is a special case of the difficulty concerning the *ἀγέννητος* that we have already discussed. For this reason, the opening sentence of De Decr. 28, which we have already cited,<sup>(134)</sup> is of great interest, as, insofar as words have meaning, it is a definite statement that the Arians began to exploit this argument only after they were put under pressure by the Fathers at

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(133) See Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. I:14.

(134) Above, p. 284.



Nicaea and after. This is of course an exaggeration, as the Letter of Eusebius of Caesarea to Euphratius indicates that this sort of difficulty was widely felt and would have made a fertile field for Arian propaganda. But unless Athanasius's statement has absolutely no relation to reality at all, it means that the Arians did not primarily resort to arguments concerning the difficulty of a plurality, or even a Trinity, of ultimates.

In conclusion, there are the less respectable possible sources of Arianism. The suggestion has been made that the Arian Second Person was suggested by the mass of inferior deities in the pagan world,<sup>(135)</sup> and that in fact it may correspond to a sort of integral summation of these. This may have had some influence with the rank and file following of Arianism, especially perhaps in the Gothic world in the latest stages of Arianism. But as far as the leaders of Arianism are concerned, once again there is only one proved case against an individual of excessive influence by non-Christian thought and background, and this case - Asterius - has nothing to do with paganism in spite of his sacrifice during the persecutions. Even more important, what sort of deity is this, who is described with the greatest possible emphasis as a creature, a thing made, etc.? It is far more likely that Arianism was the exact opposite, the perverse functioning, in the wrong context, of the prohibition against idolatry in both Testaments, especially perhaps in the Old Testament. To end this survey still in the field of the plain man, but on a nobler note, we also have to reject the idea that Arianism was the natural plain man's Christian faith as against the unintelligible sophistries of

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(135) This has been contended, e.g. by Cochrane, "Christianity and Classical Culture", p. 257f, 364.

Trinitarianism and what is regarded as the arid Hellenic intellectualism of Nicaea. However successful it may be, this whole thesis is meant to be a rebuttal of both sides of this argument. It is true that there is just enough in Athanasius to make this charge plausible, but in the main intellectualism is in the mind of his Western interpreters rather than in Athanasius himself. It is only too true that one of the gravest and truest charges against the Western Church as a whole, in all its branches, is that it has intellectualised the whole Doctrine of the Trinity out of all theological reality.<sup>(136)</sup> If a "free association" psychological test were applied to almost any present-day Westerner with the word "Trinity" as its starting point, he would instinctively associate into the fields of logic and mathematics, or, as an outsider would describe it, illogic and para-mathematics. What should be the field of association is the family life of the Father and the Son, their mutual love in the Spirit, to accept the Augustinian form of the doctrine. We Westerners do not even begin, save in a very few cases, to admit the Trinity as the great controlling fact in our devotional life. In these regards, the early Fathers, however tainted with intellectualism, were infinitely better than us, and in our study of Athanasius, we shall thankfully note the signs of the correct attitude, however inferior he might have been in this regard to Augustine. The point for us is, ultimately, that the Nicene faith is absolutely right or it is absolutely wrong. To equivocate that the Trinity is, for example, "a defensive doctrine"<sup>(137)</sup> (there can really

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(136) Cf. "The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church", Vladimir Lossky, passim, esp. ch. 3. The significant thing is that for this type of theology, the basis of mysticism(!) is the Trinity!

(137) As with, e.g. Brunner, "The Christian Doctrine of God", ch. 16 E.T.



be no more positive and aggressive doctrine) is beside the point. If the Doctrine of the Trinity and the Deity of Christ are wrong, in the plainest and most ordinary sense, Athanasius is anathema; if they are right, he must, in essence if not in all his details, be supported up to the hilt, and any ambivalence on this point will entail the theological fate of Lot's wife.

Thus, in truth, Arianism is a new creed; it is no part whatever of Christian truth, and there is no known movement, either Christian or non-Christian, which can be considered as its direct ancestor. Rather is there in every case an indirect and paradoxical relationship. On the other hand, if there is anything more in the Lucianic hypothesis than phantasy and scholastic interest in the pejorative sense, we cannot exclude the possibility that Arianism was the final product of a sort of witches' brew produced in the great quarrel between the Origenist and Antiochene theologies and Christologies which was fought out at Antioch in the last four decades of the third century, which resulted in the excommunication of Paul of Samosata and involved at least one man of the name of Lucian. But this is quite different from attributing direct ancestry to either the Samosatene or the Origenist theologies, or even to both. But when we maintain that Arianism has a paradoxical and indirect relationship to every other possible movement, this must be rigorously distinguished from the idea that Arianism is in any sense an eclectic heresy. Whatever it had or did not have, Arianism had at least a crazy unity about it, which glaringly differentiated it from all other movements and which gave it a character of its own. No mere eclectic patchwork quilt could have scared Athanasius and convulsed the Church like Arianism did. Similarly, a plagiaristic revival of Judaism or paganism,

etc., would have rated a mention in the exhaustive catalogues of heresy that we find in Irenaeus and Epiphanius, and no more. It would have been killed stone dead by ridicule, like Irenaeus's treatment of all the Gnostic heresies properly so called,<sup>(138)</sup> or treated in the way that the Council of Sardica is reported by Athanasius to have treated Marcellus of Ancyra, that is, by a statement that he put his doctrine forward as pure speculation<sup>(139)</sup> and withdrew it as soon as it was shown that it was untenable. Arianism was a far graver matter.

Having discussed what Arianism was not, we must now consider its positive characteristics. To begin, we shall quote the theologically significant portions of the Urkunden as arranged by Opitz, as well as other Arian extracts cited in Athanasius's writings. Many have been cited already; those not yet quoted are:

A large extract from the "Thalia" of Arius (Athanasius, De Synodis 15)<sup>(140)</sup>:

"God Himself then, in His own nature,<sup>(141)</sup> is ineffable by all men,  
Equal or like Himself or one in glory, He alone has none,  
And Ingenerate we call Him because of Him Who is by nature generate,  
We praise Him as without beginning<sup>(142)</sup> because of Him Who in time  
has come to be,

The One without beginning established the Son as a beginning of  
things originate,

And advanced Him as a Son to Himself by adoption.<sup>(143)</sup>

(138) See Adv. Haer. Books I and II passim.

(139) See Athanasius: Apol. C. Ar. 47 init. Marcellus was said to have proposed his doctrines ὡς ἑρῶν.

(140) Not included in Opitz. "Urkunde ..."

(141) Αὐτὸς γοῦν ὁ Θεὸς καθ' ἑστίν.

(142) ἀρχὸν - here as generally.

(143) τεκνοποίησας.



He has nothing proper to God by proper subsistence,<sup>(144)</sup>  
 For He is not equal, no, nor one in essence,<sup>(145)</sup> with Him.  
 Wise is God, for He is the teacher of wisdom.

There is full proof that God is invisible to all beings,  
 Both to things which are through the Son and to the Son is He  
 invisible.

I shall say expressly, how by the Son is seen the Invisible,  
 By that power by which God can see, and in His own measure, the Son  
 endures to see the Father, as is lawful.

There is a Triad, not in equal glories;  
 Not intermingling with each other are their subsistences;  
 One more glorious than the other in their glories ad infinitum.  
 Foreign from the Son in essence is the Father, as He is without  
 beginning.

Understand that the Monad was, but the Diad was not before it  
 existed.

Hence the Son, not being (for He existed at the Paternal Will)  
 Is God Only-Begotten, and He is alien from either.

Wisdom existed as wisdom by the will of the Wise God.

Hence He is conceived<sup>(146)</sup> in numberless conceptions;

Spirit, Power, Wisdom, God's glory, Truth, Image, and Logos.

Understand that He is conceived to be Radiance and Light.

One equal to the Son the Superior is able to beget,

But one more excellent or superior or greater, He is not able.

At God's will the Son is whatsoever and howsoever great He is,

And when and since He was, and from the moment that He subsisted  
 from God,

He, being a strong God, praises in His degree His superior.

To speak in brief, God is ineffable to His Son,

For He is to Himself what He is, that is, unspeakable,

So that nothing which is called comprehensible<sup>(147)</sup> does the Son  
 know to speak about,

(144) καθ' ὑπόστασιν. Subsistence throughout = ὑπόστασις

(145) ὁμοούσιος.

(146) ἐπινόειται, indicating the subjective character of the ἐπινόημα

(147) κατὰ τε κατάληψιν.

For it is impossible for Him to investigate the Father, Who is by Himself.

For the Son does not even know His own essence, (148)

For being Son, He really existed at the will of the Father.

What argument then allows that He Who is from the Father

Should know His own parent by comprehension?

For it is plain that for that which has a beginning

To conceive how the Unbegun is, or to grasp the idea, is not possible."

All this is a simple affirmation, many times repeated, that the Second Person must be a creature, existing at the will of the Father. Even where titles such as "strong God" are used, these are merely honorific designations radically qualified by the context. For the same reason, even where God is said to adopt the Second Person as a Son, the emphasis is still on the impropriety of the use of the term, the Second Person still being, in origin and in essence, a creature. The other great titles of the Son are simply ranked among the numberless conceptions in which the Son is said to exist; the Greek plainly indicates that these are subjective approximations to the (presumably) ineffable and incomprehensible truth, and are not intended to represent anything objectively real about the Son. Perhaps the most amazing sections, on close analysis, are those in which the Divine Revelation in Christ <sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ treated. Arius starts by saying that it is through Him that <sup>he</sup> ~~came~~ came to be that the Ingenerate, or Unoriginate, is revealed. These phrases are a sort of parody of the Euphuistic expressions in which, from the time of Melito of Sardis onwards, the Church traditionally celebrated the mystery of the Incarnation and the Atonement, and rightly so. But they are in themselves excusable since they involve what is perhaps the most difficult point in orthodox theology itself; how the creaturehood of Christ can reveal the Deity.



But any possibility of a sound approach is annihilated at the end of the extract, where Arius denies at great length and with the greatest possible emphasis that the Son has any true knowledge of the Father at all to pass on to us; at the most, anything that He knows is of the same character as our unaided knowledge, whatever that might be. Thus, the conclusion is inescapable that Christ is either unnecessary or essentially useless. What is worse still, the only significant thing for Arius about the Father is His majesty and transcendence. But the Son cannot know that, being a creature; therefore, no more can we. We cannot know the Father's love and grace; in the long run, the only thing that we can know that constitutes religious revelation is the bare fact that we are the Father's creatures. It is interesting to see what the Arians would have made of, say, John 15: 15; probably they would have treated it as further grist to their mill.

So far, we are apparently in the sphere of a rationalistic monotheism of the most arid type. But the case is much worse than that. Arius says that even the Son does not know His own essence. Now, Arius patently means by "essence" the status of the Son as a creature, perhaps His origination as such; since he expresses the absolute difference between the Divine First Person and the creaturely Second Person by a denial of the community of essence. Besides, there is a sense in which Christians cannot know even their status as creatures without some knowledge of God's act of their creation, and of His intentions; this means a knowledge of providence, etc.; perhaps even of God's predestination, to put it more fundamentally still. Thus the conclusion to be drawn from the Arian treatment of revelation is that Arius went dangerously close to denying to the Son, and a

fortiori to ourselves, the possibility of even that bare minimum of knowledge of God that he appeared to leave open. ~~It is~~ What sort of religion it is which affirms that all things, including the Logos-Son, are creatures, and denies that even the Son can know, as a really significant fact, that the Father created Him! This is only one short stage from atheism.

Similarly, if the Son does not even know His own essence, that is, as a creature, what comes of all the statements of Asterius, for example, that the Son learned to create from the Father, presumably, as an apprentice from a master? If the only important thing about the Father is that He is creator; in fact, that He created the Son, because it was the Son that "created" us; is not this sort of argument excluded in advance? Or how could there be any real progress of such a Son, if He had nothing of God, either in His knowledge or in His innermost heart, that could serve as a teleological pattern? The possibilities suggested by these speculation are most diverting. (149)

Next, following the order of Opitz, we take the Letter of Arius to Eusebius of Nicomedia, the end of which we have already cited (Opitz, Urk. I, Epiph. Haer. 69:6 (I), Theod. Eccl. Hist. I:5). The theologically relevant portions are: "Eusebius your brother of Caesarea, Theodotus, Paulinus, Athanasius, Gregorius, Aëtius, and all the bishops of the East, have been condemned for saying ὅτι προὔρχει ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ υἱοῦ ἀνάρχως " And again: " . . . (We teach) that the Son is not unbegotten, nor in any way a part of the Unbegotten, and not ἐκ υποκειμένου τινός, but by will (θελήματι) and counsel (βουλῇ), He subsisted before times and before ages, full of grace and truth, God, Only-begotten, Unchangeable (ἀναλλοίωτος), and that before He was begotten (γεννηθῆναι) or purposed (ὀρίσθαι) or established, He was not. For He was not ἀγεννητος." We are following the Opitz text, which

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(149) and will be held over till the appropriate stage of this Chapter.



reads *ἰχθύητος* throughout, but the last sentence strongly suggests that the correct reading may be *ἰχθύνητος*, or at least that Arius really had the latter in mind, and used the former only to obfuscate or because he was denouncing Gnostic or Manichaean doctrines of the Begetting of the Second Person, that is, that the Son was a separable part in essence of the First Person in such a way as to imply that each part was incomplete after the act of generation, or rather separation.<sup>(150)</sup> The other alternative suggested is that the Son is from another substrate, so that this is to be classified as one of the Arian attempts to prove that any other relation of the Son to the Father other than that of creature is absurd. As in the case of the "Thalia", the dependence of the Son on the Will of the Father is one of the main ways in which He is a creature. As far as the description of Unchangeable is concerned, this contradicts the unanimous testimony

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(150) What the real objection of orthodox theology was to such terms as *ἀπορροή*, *προβολή*, was that these implied a diminution of the source; when these concepts are denounced as materialistic, or as used in a materialistic way, this is what is meant. See Newman's notes on these two words, in Vol. II of "Select Treatises against the Arians, , ." (1881 ed.), and his notes, in earlier editions and Robertson, on De Decr. 11 and De Synodis 16. This sort of argument was identical to that of the Arians against their use, except that Athanasius insisted that they be analogically purged of their objectionable materialistic implications, and that Arius and the Arians maintained that this was the only possible sense of them, and therefore that the only relationship between Father and Son must be Creator and creature. This diminution and impairment and partition of the essence of the Source was one of the most prominent characteristics of the Gnostic type of doctrine of emanation, and one in which they boasted; see Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. Bk. I passim. When Athanasius is held to criticise emanationism, it is in this sense, and must be clearly distinguished from the sense in which Athanasius's proper theology of the Son (which of course involves no diminution, division, or partition of the essence of the Father) is still really an emanationist theology like what later became the Doctrine of the Procession of the Spirit, rather than being truly filial in, say, the Augustinian sense.

of the opponents of Arianism, although the testimony is much firmer for the word *πρεπτός* than for *ἀλλοίωτος*. Possibly, the Arians were here wishing primarily to exclude what they regarded as the sort of radical change implied, for them, in the change to *λόγος* ~~ἐκ~~ *προφορικὸς* from *λόγος ἐνδιάθετος*. To take this line further, this could even be an indication that the two terms in question, that are often regarded as having the meaning "changeable", are not really synonymous at all, but that the meaning of the former should, even more decisively than usual, be sought in terms of progress on the one hand, and ethical character on the other, than usual. In this sense, a thing can be *πρεπτός* and not *ἀλλοίωτος*, in the way that a car that is driven up a hill with constant gradient can be said to remain in the same state of operation, or that a place in a steady succession of cyclonic depressions can be said to enjoy settled changeable weather. Perhaps the error might have been in the mind of the orthodox critics of Arianism in erroneously regarding the two as synonymous, and in thus missing the exact subtlety of meaning involved in the Arian doctrine that the Son was *πρεπτός*.

Urk. II, from a letter of Eusebius of Nicomedia to Arius, quoted by Athanasius, De Syn. 17, is: "Since your sentiments are good, pray that all may adopt them; for it is plain to any one, that what has been made was not before its origination; but what came to be has a beginning of being." It may be unfair to judge the letter on a short extract, but the extract as a whole is a gross and blatant case of a *petitio principii*, which characteristic it shares with most Arian writings as we have them, including to a certain extent the previous extract and that from the "Thalia".

The important part of the Letter of Eusebius of Caesarea to



Euphrasion (Urk. III) has already been discussed, and the next theologically significant extract is from IV B,<sup>(151)</sup> Encyclical of Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, where he gives a summary of Arian teaching: " . . . that God was not always Father, but there was once when God was not Father; that the Logos of God was not eternally, but there was once when God was not Father; that the Logos of God was not eternally, but ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων γέγονεν. For the God Who Is (ὢν) has made τὸν μὴ ὄντα ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος. Therefore, ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν. For the Son is κτίσμα and ποίημα; That He is neither like (ὅμοιος) <sup>the Father in</sup> ~~Logos nor~~ essence (κατ' οὐσίαν) <sup>nor the Father's true and natural (φύσει) Logos, nor</sup> His True Wisdom, but is one of the things made and things originate, while He is καταχρηστικῶς called Logos and Wisdom, since He Himself was made by God's own Logos and Wisdom which is in God whereby God made all things and Him also. Wherefore He is τρεπτός καὶ ἀλλοίωτος τὴν φύσιν, as are all rational beings (λογικά). Hence the Logos is ξένος and ἀλλότριος and ἀπεσχοινισμένος from the Essence of God and the Father is invisible to the Son. Nor does the Logos know the Father perfectly and exactly, neither can He perfectly see Him. For the Son does not know His own essence, as He is (ὡς ἔστι); for He has been made for our sake (δι' ἡμῶν) in order that God might create us through Him as through an instrument . . ." This is a summary of Arian teaching by an enemy, devised so as to include as many of their characteristic slogans as possible; it is a fair summary, even though it would not have the authority of a direct quotation of an Arian writer. The final statement is unique in the summaries of Arian teaching, since it points, to say the least, to a conclusion that Athanasius presents as no more than something to which the Arians would be driven if they followed the logic of their arguments to the limit, the idea of a Logos constituted, not absolutely in Himself, but by human need.<sup>(152)</sup> Admittedly, the Athanasian form of the conclusion is more extreme than anything in this extract, and Asterius, as we have seen, said something very similar,

(151) Athanasius, Montfaucon I: 397. Migne PG XVIII 548-581.

(152) See, e.g. C. Ar. II: 30.



though not going as far as to use the expression  $\delta\iota'\eta\mu\alpha\varsigma$ , but probably this is a case in which Alexander's interpretation unwittingly outran the stage of Arian argumentation which they were willing to set down in black and white; and it will be treated as such in our study.

Next, Urkunde 6, the account of the faith of the Arian party of Alexandria when challenged by the Bishop Alexander:

(Athanasius De Syn. 16; Epiphanius, Haer. 69: 7) ". . . We acknowledge One God, alone Ingenerate, alone Everlasting, alone without beginning, alone True, alone having immortality, alone Wise, alone Good, alone Sovereign, Judge, Governor, and Providence of all, Unalterable and Unchangeable, just and good, God of Law and Prophets and New Testament, ; Who begat an Only-begotten Son before eternal times, through Whom He has made both the ages and the universe, and begat Him, not in semblance but in truth, and that He made Him subsist at His own will, unalterable and unchangeable ( $\acute{\alpha}\tauρεπτον καὶ ἀναλλοίωτον$ ); perfect creature of God, but not as one of the creatures; offspring, but not as one of the things that have been begotten;<sup>(153)</sup> nor as Valentinus pronounced that the Offspring of the Father was an issue ( $\pi\rho\betaολή$ ); nor as Manichaeus taught that the offspring was a coessential portion<sup>(154)</sup> of the Father; or as Sabellius dividing the Monad speaks of a  $\delta\iota\sigma\pi\alpha\tau\acute{o}\rho\mu\alpha$ ; nor as Hieracas, of one torch from another, or as a lamp divided into two; nor that He Who was before was afterwards generated or newly-created ( $\epsilon\pi\iota\kappa\rho\iota\sigma\theta\epsilon\iota\alpha$ ) into a Son, as thou too thyself, blessed hope,<sup>(155)</sup> in the midst of the Church and in session, hast often condemned; but, as we say, at the will of God, created before times and before ages, and gaining life and being from the Father, Who gave subsistence to His glories together with Him. For the Father did not, in giving to Him the inheritance of all things, deprive Himself of

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(153)  $\kappa\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \Theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\ \tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu$ , ἀλλ' οὐχ ὡς ἐν τῶν κρτισμάτων·  $\chi\epsilon\nu\eta\mu\alpha$ , ἀλλ' οὐχ ὡς ἐν τῶν γε χεννημένων... This statement was cited by Athanasius in C. Ar. II: 18 ff. and its internal contradictions exposed.

(154) μέρος ομοούσιον.

(155)  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\tau\epsilon\rho$  - the usual term of respect for a Bishop of what later became a Patriarchal see.



what He had ingenerately in Himself; for He is the fountain of all things. Thus there are three Hypostases. And God, being the cause (αἴτιος) of all things, is without beginning and altogether Sole, but the Son, being begotten apart from time by the Father, and being created and founded before ages, was not before His generation, but, being begotten apart from time before all things, alone was made to subsist by the Father. For He is not eternal or co-eternal or co-ingenerate with the Father, nor has He his being together with the Father, as some speak of relation, , introducing two ingenerate beginnings, but God is before all things as being Monad and beginning of all. Wherefore also He is before the Son, as we have learned also from thy preaching in the midst of the Church. So far then as He has being from God, and glories, and life, and all things are delivered unto Him, in such a sense is God His origin. For He is above Him, as being His God and before Him. But if the terms 'from Him', and 'from the womb', and 'I came forth from the Father, and am come', be understood by some to mean as if a part of Him, one-in-essence or as an issue, then the Father is according to them compounded and divisible and alterable (πρεπιτός) and a body, suffering the consequences of the bodily state, <sup>(156)</sup> who is the Incorporeal God." This passage is really an Arian apologetic document, and should be evaluated as such; above all, it is apologetic to the Church. It is also an agreed statement of a party rather than an exposition of the doctrine by a noted individual leader, and therefore is again for that reason far more cautious. It is also in credal form, or rather in a parody of it. This is probably the reason for the emphasis on the theology of the Father which is unique in any remains of Arian teaching; if this had been in all sincerity a general feature of Arianism, Athanasius would have had much more to say than he did about such things as the detailed typological exegesis of the Old Testament (vide in this extract, "God of Law and Prophets"), which was traditional in Alexandria. Probably

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(156) τὰ ἀκόλουθα σώματι πλάχων.

the same can be said of the statement that the Son is not only ἀλλοίωτος but ἀίρετος. There is a good deal of rational monotheism. But the chief characteristic of this Arian statement of faith is that it is an attempt to prove that any attempt to give an account of a real filial relation between Father and Son that did not reduce itself to the creaturely relation, would inevitably result in heresy of the type that had been condemned ad nauseam as Gnostic; it would involve in some way a diminution or partition of the indivisible Essence of God, if it were not Sabellian, according to the apologetic of the Arians. Fundamentally, it is a reductio ad absurdum of the whole notion of Sonship in any real sense as applying to God.

Urkunde 7, from a letter of Eusebius of Caesarea to Alexander of Alexandria,<sup>(157)</sup> is an attempt to defend the Arians against the accusation that they taught that the Son ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος ἔχοντες ὡς εἰς πᾶν πᾶντων. He undoubtedly did not appreciate the subtleties involved in the distinction which the Arians made, that He was "a creature but not as one of the creatures", etc., with which Athanasius was to deal so effectively in C. Ar. II: 18-43.

Urkunde 8, the Letter of Eusebius of Nicomedia to Paulinus of Tyre (Theodoret HE. I: 5), is worth a substantial quotation:

" . . . We have never heard that there are Two Ingenerates, nor that One has been divided into Two, nor have we learned or believed that it has ever undergone corporeal affection, but we affirm that the Ingenerate is One, and One also that which exists in truth by Him (ἐκ τῶν ὄντων), yet not from His Essence, not at all participating in the Nature of the Ingenerate or being from His Essence, but made entirely

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(157) Like the letter to Euphrasion, in Acts of the Seventh Oecumenical Council.



distinct in nature and power, but *πρὸς τελείαν ὁμοιότητα* both of character (*διὰ θέσεως*) and power to the Maker." Later, it is maintained that the only alternatives to this are that the Son is *μέρος αὐτοῦ* or *ἐξ ἀπορροίας τῆς οὐσίας* : Is. 1: 2, Deut. 32: 18, Job 38: 28 quoted against these. And later: ". . . There is indeed nothing *ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας αὐτοῦ*, yet everything that exists has come into being *βουλήματι αὐτοῦ* . . . ." No further comment is needed; the *ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας* , etc., is interpreted as necessarily involving the Manichaeian or Gnostic type of heresy.

Urkunde 9, fragments from a Letter of Paulinus of Tyre, preserved in Eusebius of Caesarea, C. Marcellum, <sup>(158)</sup> are no more than an accusation of Sabellianism against Marcellus of Ancyra, while No. 11, the letter of Athanasius of Anazarba, has already been quoted and discussed. Nos. 12 and 13, from the letters written by George, later Bishop of Laodicea, but then a presbyter in Alexandria, to respectively Alexander his Bishop, and to his fellow-Arians, are: (each from Athanasius, De Synodis 17): "Do not complain against Arius and his fellows for saying, "Once the Son of God was not," for Isaiah came to be son of Amoz, and, whereas Amoz was before Isaiah came to be, Isaiah was not before, but came to be afterwards.", and, "Why complain to Alexander, saying that the Son is from the Father? For you too need fear not fear to say that the Son is from God. For if the Apostle wrote, "All things are from God," and it is plain that all things are made *ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων*, though the Son too is a creature and one of things made, still He may be said to be from God in that way in which all things are said to be "from God" ' ". This is the same as the argument attributed by Athanasius to the Arians on the floor of the Council of Nicaea, in De Decretis 18-20, and which he maintains drove the orthodox to reinstate the Homousion as the only test that would

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(158) I: 4: 18-20 and 49-51.

defy all equivocation. But the most significant thing about this form of argumentation is that it reveals that the Arians instinctively gave human and creaturely features the priority over God; this is here revealed with reference to the vital analogy of sonship; it is human and creaturely sonship that is the norm, to which Divine sonship must comply. The doctrine of analogy, as we have already seen, and as we shall see much more fully, was always one of the main issues in the Arian controversy, although this is almost never recognised.

Urkunde 14, the Letter of Alexander of Alexandria to his namesake of Thessalonica or Constantinople,<sup>(159)</sup> needs more extensive citation. We have already quoted his reference to certain humanitarian Christologists from Ebion to the Paulianists. We shall now cite more extensively the Arian theology proper. The first sentence, since it appears to be a pair of Arian slogans depending in part on its alliterative and assonant effects, will be left in the original Greek:

ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ γέγονεν ὕστερον ὁ πρότερον μὴ ὑπάρχων τοιοῦτος γινόμενος ὅτε καὶ ποτε γέγονεν ὁὗτος καὶ τὰς πέφυκεν ἄνθρωπος. God, they say, created all things ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, and they include in the number of creatures both rational and irrational even the Son of God. Consistently with this doctrine they, as a necessary consequence, affirm that He τρεπῆς εἰς φύσεως, and capable both of virtue and vice, and thus, by their hypothesis of His having been created ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων they overthrow the testimony of the Divine Scriptures . . . . they affirm that God foreknew and foresaw that His Son would not rebel against Him, and therefore that He chose him in preference to all others. They likewise assert that He was not chosen because He had <sup>ἄντι</sup> anything superior to the other sons of God, for, they say, there is no son of God <sup>ἄντι</sup> φύσει, nor anyone with any peculiar relation (ἰδιότης) to Him.<sup>(160)</sup>

(159) Theodoret H.E. I:4: 1.

(160) We have improved on the translation of Theodoret in L.N.P-N.F.



He was chosen, they allege, because though *πρεπτοῦς φύσεως*, His painstaking character suffered no deterioration." Little special comment is necessary, except to point out that here it is definitely stated that the Arians believed that the Son was *πρεπτός*, the word having primarily its ethical connotation. The only other Urkunde of Opitz that requires quotation in this connection is No. 21, a letter of Eusebius of Nicomedia to the Council of Nicaea, preserved in the Latin only in Ambrose, De Fide 15, in which he says, inter alia, "Si verum dei filium et increatum dicimus, *ἐμμορφόσιον* cum Patre incipimus confiteri". This shows the odium in which the term was held in certain circles since the condemnation of Paul of Samosata, which the Arians exploited to the full.

We shall now consider other passages in Athanasius where he appears to quote Arian writings directly. To begin, there are the passages in C. Ar. I: 5-6 which are direct quotations from the "Thalia", but are not covered by the large extract in De Syn. 15. (At 21A:)

" 'God was not always Father . . . Once God was alone and not yet a Father, but afterwards He became Father . . . The Son was not always . . . (but, like other creatures) was made *ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων* . . . *ἦν ποτε, ὅτε οὐκ ἦν* . . . *οὐκ ἦν πρὶν γεννηθῆναι*, but He, as others, had an origin of creation (*τοῦ κτίσσεσθαι*). . . . For God was alone, and the Logos as yet was not, nor the Wisdom. Then, wishing to form us, thereupon He made a certain one, (*ἕνα τινά*), and named Him Logos and Wisdom and Son, that He might form us by means of Him (*δι' αὐτοῦ*) . . .

(~~-----~~) (Athanasius continues, not in direct quotation, to attribute the Two Logos-Wisdom doctrine to Arius and also that the Second Person is *πρεπτός* in the ethical sense; thus) . . . Therefore, as foreknowing that He would be good, did God by anticipation (*προλαμβάνων*) bestow on Him this glory which afterwards, as man, He attained from virtue. Thus, in consequence of His works, which God Foreknew, has He brought it to pass that He, such as He was, should now come to be

. . . (ch. 6) the Logos is not True God . . . though He is called God, yet He is not true God . . . by participation in grace, He, as others, is God only in name . . ." (Then follow the Arian doctrine of the radical distinction between the Son and God, and the Son's ignorance, as at the end of the Quotation in "De Synodis")." There is a very similar passage in Ep. Encycl. ad Eposc. Aeg et Lib. 12, which is not described expressly as being quotations from the "Thalia", but which is so similar that it needs no further comment.

Other passages which appear as direct quotations are: De Decr. 6, init.: " 'Not always Father, not always Son; for the Son οὐκ ἦν πρὶν γεννηθῆναι, but He also has come to be ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, and in consequence God was not always Father of the Son, but when the Son came to be and was created, then was God called His Father. For the Logos is κτισμὰ and ποιημὰ, and foreign and unlike the Father in essence; and the Son is by nature (φύσει) neither the Father's true Logos nor His only and true Wisdom, but being a creature and one of the things made, He is improperly<sup>(161)</sup> called Logos and Wisdom; for by the Logos which is in God was He made, as were all things too. Wherefore the Son is not true God.' "

De Decr. 7, init.; on the relation between the Logos's creatureliness and ours: " 'We consider that the Son has this prerogative over others and is therefore called Only-Begotten, because He alone was brought to be by God alone, and all other things were created by God through the Son.' " At the beginning of C. Ar. I: 14, there is a quotation from an Arian work which states that a genuinely co-eternal Son would not be Son, but Brother of the Father. There is a most important passage in C. Ar. I: 22, where Athanasius gives an account of the arguments that the Arians repeatedly used to the proletariat in the market place: " 'Ὁ ὢν τὸν μὴ ὄντα ἐκ τοῦ ὄντος πεποίηκεν, ἢ τὸν ὄντα; ὄντα οὖν αὐτὸν πεποίηκεν,

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(161) Καταχρηστικῶς - perhaps "merely by convention of usage."  
Montf. - non nisi abusione.



ἢ μὴ οὐκ;

(162) And Again, 'Is the Unoriginate one or two?'

and, 'Has he free will so that it is by His own choice that He does not alter<sup>(163)</sup> τρεπῆς ὧν φύσεως? For He is not as stone to remain on His own<sup>(164)</sup> immovable.' and . . . (to women) 'Hadst thou a son before bearing? Now, as thou hadst not, so neither was the Son of God before His generation.' " The argument about free will is again cited

at the beginning of C. Ar. I: 35, in these words: "Has He free will or not? Is He good according to free will, and can He, if He will, alter (τραπήναι), τρεπῆς ὧν φύσεως? Or is it that, as wood or stone, He has not free choice of movement<sup>(165)</sup> or inclination to one side or the other?" In C. Ar. I: 37: 88C, there is another argument for the

Logos being τρεπῆς, which is introduced as an interpretation of

Philipp. 2: 9-10 and Ps. 45 (Eng. B.): 7, which "Eusebius and Arius have dared to say and even to write"; " 'If it was on account of this that He was exalted and received grace, and on account of this that He was anointed, He received a reward for purpose.<sup>(166)</sup> But, having acted from purpose,<sup>(167)</sup> He is altogether of alterable (τρεπῆς) nature."

(162) Montfaucon postulates the insertion of a μὴ or an οὐκ at ἔκ τούτου (οὐκ or μὴ) οὕτως πεποιήκεν. In this case, the translation would be, paraphrased, "When He Who Is made Him from what is not, was He then not existent, or existent? Therefore, when He made Him, was He (previously) existent or non-existent?" On the other hand, it is just possible to interpret this passage without the insertion; in this case the first question would carry the implication that - supposing that the Second Person was "made"-there would be a rigorous and complete correlation between the pre-existence of the Second Person, or of anything else, and the fact that the process of creation would be ex materie, as distinct from ex nihilo, with the further insinuation that God's dealings with the Son were inferior in character to His dealings with the creation of the world.

(163) καὶ αὐτεξούσιος ἔστι καὶ ἰδίᾳ προδιρέσει, οὐ τρεπεται.  
The translation of Newman-Robertson has been deliberately altered so as to bring out the force of the passage more clearly.

(164) ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ.

(165) εἰς τὸ κυνεῖσθαι κ.τ.λ.- this infinitive is evidently middle voice, in the exact original classical meaning of doing a thing for one's own advantage.

(166) τῆς προδιρέσεως.

(167) instrumental dative



The passages from ch. 22 are an excellent illustration of the Arian use of analogy, whereby the human examples are absolutely the criterion, and the terms as applied to God can only be understood in terms of their human use. Even more important are the illustrations of the Arian use of the concept *ὑπερβολή*. There are two elements in the meaning of this word, as illustrated in the Arian controversy; one is, "ethical in character", and the other will not be clear till later. But it is the former meaning that is in evidence here. Of course, in one sense, the ethical character of the Son was, for the Arians, implied by His creatureliness, it being understood in addition that He would necessarily be higher than the inorganic or even perhaps the organic non-ethical level; again, and this is even more important, creatureliness is implied by His being an ethical agent. All this, in the Arian terms, was accepted rightly by Athanasius as correct. But, with the Arians, the only two possibilities were ethical agency so understood, and being as wood and stone, that is, membership of the sub-personal sphere where complete determinism, in its most immediately obvious form, was the absolute rule. If this is literally the only choice, what about God Himself? - to make a rejoinder that did not occur to anybody, not even to Athanasius, although he used that sort of argument often enough in other contexts and may have trusted to its being obvious even here. This portion of the Arian theology is really so bad that the conclusion is irresistible that the Arians in fact had in mind some quite novel position, for their day, which they lacked the conceptual apparatus to put into words. This will be further discussed later. But for the present it is sufficient to note that this is an even more serious case than the Arian treatment of Revelation in the "Thalia" of an argument whose true implication is, not Arianism, but atheism, in the most literal sense.



The final passage that we shall quote is from Socrates, Eccl. Hist. I: 5, which is not formally, but may quite easily be in fact, a direct quotation of a piece of Arian reasoning: "If the Father generated (ἐγένησε) the Son, He who was generated has a beginning of existence (ἀρχή); and it is clear from this that there was once when the Son was not. It follows of necessity that He has his subsistence ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων." This looks at first like the statement of a man perplexed by the difficulties of human sonship. On second reading, it turns out to be a most impudent attempt to prove that if God has a son, He could not have a son! The Arians were deliberately exploiting the difficulties about the human analogy of sonship, whereby a human son always post-dates his parents, to go much further and prove that the Son of God, since He came from not-existing into a state of existing, consists of nothing in the same way as a son consists of the essence of his parents!

We have considered the Arian heresy as it is revealed by a fairly cursory examination of the deliberate statements of its proponents. Certain other less obvious characteristics, which we shall mention later, especially those concerned with what might be called the internal and hidden logic of Arianism, can only be revealed by a study not so much of what the Arians said, but of the way in which Athanasius handles the argument; in some cases, the matter is best left till the writings of Athanasius are followed through in full detail. But the time has come to summarise our conclusions about the positive characteristics of Arianism, as they are visible from the writings of its own followers. In this discussion, without quoting Athanasius in detail, we shall inevitably be involved in a general way with the Athanasian refutation of the heresy. The positive characteristics of the Arian heresy are eight in number, as revealed out of their own mouths.

(1) The Arian movement was pursued with fanaticism and vigour, and was a major disruptive force in the Church. In fact, this last statement is almost ludicrously mild. Although there is no way of checking this, the author has the strong feeling that a great deal of the traditional bitter reaction to heresy in the Church is a spill-over from this deadly crisis. People of less theological sense than Athanasius gathered that this was the proper reaction to heresy in general on the part of the faithful Christian and transferred it to heresies which did not have one tenth of the menace of Arianism, and which should have been killed stone dead with ridicule, as Irenaeus treated the Gnostic systems, or treated according to the amazingly modern scientific method adopted - or allegedly adopted, whatever one may think of the honesty of a council that was not disinterested - by the Council of Sardica in its dealings with Marcellus of Ancyra; according to its own records it treated the doctrines of Marcellus as hypotheses for theological investigation by methods appropriate to theology, they were scrapped by all concerned, including their proponent, when they were found wanting, and all was forgiven. The only possible rival to Arianism as a sheer menace was Marcionitism, and even this did not scare Irenaeus in the way that Arianism scared Athanasius. Even Paulianism, the heresy of Paul of Samosata, the next in rank, did not have such disastrous effects, and the various other types of Sabellianism or Adoptionism were by comparison distinctly mild.

(2) Arianism cannot be considered as an eclectic creed, or even internally inconsistent in the normal sense, but rather as a heresy with its own, albeit perverse, logic, unity, and internal



consistency.<sup>(168)</sup> No merely eclectic creed, and no stale re-issue of old heresies which had long lost their old vitality and had been long refuted by the Church, could have had the characteristics described in the last paragraph. Arianism was new, young, vigorous - and a genuine unity. The inconsistency and inviability of Arianism were of the sort that could only show themselves as internal contradictions revealed by dialectical development and conflict with the true Faith; they were not joins evident to the merest scrutiny.

(3) The roots of Arianism were entirely in the Christian Church; not the Christian Church as a theological and eschatological entity, but the empirical Church of the early fourth century. After all, with the possible exception of Asterius the Sophist, all the Arian leaders, including Arius himself and Eusebius of Nicomedia, had unimpeachably Christian - and orthodox - backgrounds. If it has no direct relation to any previous Christian movement, but merely a series of indirect and paradoxical relationships, it is even more difficult to relate it positively to paganism, or to non-Christian philosophy and culture. If there is any such relation, it is through their "Christianised" forms, and, again, a relation that is extremely paradoxical. If these can be held responsible, the critical adulteration of the Faith was done, not under Arius, but long before,

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(168) The eclectic theory is supported, in the most extreme form, by Robertson, *Introd. (L.N.P-N.F.)* pp. xxix-xxx. To a less extent and in a rather different way, Gwatkin, *Studies in Arianism*, 21-32, takes the same line, although it can be more clearly seen from his account that the inconsistencies in Arianism as between its earlier and later forms were a sort of dialectical result of its own inner self-contradiction at least as much as the effect of its eclectic sources, as postulated. There are traces at least of the eclectic theory in almost all authors; this can be seen particularly in the case of Atzberger, "Die Logoslehre des heiligen Athanasius", pp. 22-33 and 62-70, where his methodology and his very care in listing all reasonably possible sources of Arianism give the heresy an eclectic appearance that was perhaps unintentional, but the avoidance of which needs special care.



in the ante-Nicene Church. Much of the intense bitterness that surrounded the Arian heresy was certainly due to its being an internal threat to the Church at least as much as an external threat to orthodoxy. Its hold on the fourth-century Church, the difficulty that it had in dealing with it, the success of the Arians in concealing themselves behind other controversies and inventing newer and more subtle disguises which would trap people into admitting their position, were surely signs that it had caught the theology and life of the Church off balance in some vital respect, and it would not be a great exaggeration to say that it must have stimulated a theological guilty conscience somewhere. We agree with Newman and Möhler in regarding Arianism as genuinely and portentously new, but not when they maintain that there was a roughly uniform body of ante-Nicene theology which was orthodox and free from corruption in roughly the same way - in this regard - as the Nicene faith.

According to the schema that we have provisionally adopted for the analysis of Athanasian theology, the next topic should be the exegetical and other basis for the conclusions, but the character of Arianism is such that it is better to follow on with the outstanding characteristic of the developed position. Thus:

(4) The great feature of Arianism, and the unifying factor which we have postulated, is simply a fanatical insistence that the Second Person, the Pre-Incarnate Lord, is a creature. This also appears to be the primary aspect of the heresy.<sup>(169)</sup> All their

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(169) Apart from the authors that we have cited already, none of whom are really important in this connection, there have been various attempts to diagnose the fundamental theological principle, in the systematic, as opposed to the historical, sense, of the Arian heresy. The first attempt as far as the author knows, was that of Möhler, op. cit. p. 176, for whom "Der Charakter des Arianismus ist Trennung (separation) der Welt von Gott," from which all else follows. During the remainder of the nineteenth century, after



classical slogans, ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν, οὐκ ἦν πρὶν γεννηθῆναι, τρεπτός, ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ,

which this form of scholarship went out of fashion, various other answers were given, usually by Protestant rather than Roman scholars, the latter preferring to accept heresy as a brute fact, or diabolical fact. None of the latter went as far as Newman did, by implication, in suggesting a resemblance to Protestantism. Later, Baur, criticising Möhler, whom he regarded as having only given the negative side, came down in the main on rationalism. In one of its respects, Arianism was a vain attempt to clean up the difficulties of the earlier theology concerning the unity and the difference of Father and Son; it only succeeded in emphasising the difference ever more logically and sharply. Nicaea went to the other extreme in emphasising the unity, but was nearer the truth. (Die christliche Lehre von der Dreieinigkeit und Menschwerdung Gottes in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung, 319-333). However, he never properly distinguished this problem from that of the relation between the Eternal and the non-eternal (presumably creaturely), and - which is the same thing - did not in the least appreciate the point of Athanasius Contra Arianos I: 30-34, as is shown by the following statement (loc. cit. 326-327): "Der Begriff der ewigen Zeugung schliesst beide Momente in sich, sowohl das Endliche und das Unendliche: der Gezeugte ist als der Abhängige auch das Endliche, der von Ewigkeit Gezeugte demnach sowohl endlich als unendlich". Following this statement, he maintains that the conundrum of Paul of Samosata, as we have interpreted it, is the truth; either the Son is not personally distinct, or there is no Homousion. His remarks (loc. cit. 333) on the basically cosmological character of Arianism are much better. On the other side, Baur is impressed by the intellectual rigour of Arian argumentation, contrasted with the, to him, unsatisfactory quality of Athanasius: "According to ancient doctors, Arianism had a marked tendency to dialectic . . . But this charge points to those characteristic qualities of Arianism without which it could never have gained such historical significance - its methodological procedure, its adherence to definiteness of conception, and boldness in accepting legitimate conclusions." (The Church History of the First Three Centuries, E.T. II: 113; see also 112-120). Later, when he gives a positive description of the content of Arian rationalism, he is not so complimentary: "Der Arianismus ist in seiner letzten Konsequenz der entschiedenste Rationalismus, welcher in seinem abstrakten Verstandesbegriffen und Kategorien das objective Wesen der Dinge selbst zu haben glaubt. Die Religion ist ihm daher vor allem ein blosses Wissen, und es muss für ihn alles, was sich auf das Verhältniss Gottes und des Menschen bezieht, klar und durchsichtig sein. Er ist der Feind von allem Mystischen und Transcendenten, von allem, was sich nicht dialektisch definiren und auf bestimmte Begriffe bringen lässt . . . . (The relation between God and man) nur darin bestehen, dass der Mensch den Willen Gottes kennt und befolgt." (Die christliche Kirche vom Anfang des 4 ten bis zum Ende des 6 ten Jahrhunderts . . . p. 99, pp. 97-102 for general review; Arianism is an abstract separation, Athanasian theology a unity (conceived in excessively Hegelian terms) between God and man. Even more to the point, in "Die christliche Lehre von der Dreieinigkeit und Menschwerdung Gottes . . .", p. 354, in



etc., are really just corollaries or mutual implicates of the original

in opposition to Möhler, he says, "Das endliche Subject erweckt in sich selbst das Bewusstseyn der Unendlichkeit, freilich nur einer solchen, die in der Unendlichkeit der sittlichen Freiheit und des sittlichen Strebens besteht, deren Ziel aber zuletzt doch nur die Erlangung göttlicher Würde, die Vergottlichung des Menschlichen seyn kann. Dies ist der eigenthümliche Standpunct des Arius."

The lastmentioned citation dates from 1840. For its period, it was most remarkably perceptive. Owing to certain experiences of history since that time, we should have been able to see certain things much more clearly, and it is most unfortunate that nobody has followed up this line of attack. Baur of course was also inhibited by a fundamental lack of sympathy with Christian orthodoxy. What he described in terms of rationalism, clarity-and-distinctness à la Descartes, anti-mysticism, etc., is far better and far more clearly understood in a more positive and less formal way in terms of our Eighth Feature of Arianism, below. After all, Athanasius is as cogent in his argumentation, and as clear and distinct in the concepts that he uses, as any Arian. But the last quotation, in particular, is a very close approximation, for a man who was no more than a contemporary of Feuerbach, to the principle that human conceptions have absolute priority over anything Divine. The primacy of the ethical, which is often seen as Baur's principle, is relatively secondary.

Dorner follows, in a rather different and perhaps excessively Hegelian way, the elements in both Möhler and Baur, and is the only authority of the author's acquaintance to have any doubts about extreme monotheism as a basic principle of the heresy (History of the Development of the Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ, E.T. Div. I, Vol. II, 227-244, and 286-299 for later Arians). Loc. cit. 234; " . . . (the basic principle) was not the unity of God or a strict monotheism, for Arius unhesitatingly after his manner set his face against a rigid Monotheism. But his conception of God admitted absolutely of no distinctions, no self-exemption, no self-communication." Again, pp. 243-244; "And yet his deistic point of view drives him to attribute such an absoluteness to the world, as constitutes it in reality a plurality of deities. In the presence of the freedom of man, God actually recedes completely into the background." - what we have described as the atheistic consequences of Arianism. Later, Böhringer, "Athanasius und Arius . . ." 169-201, gives the more usual account in terms of rational monotheism in the more usual sense: (we quote the marginal summary on p. 187,) "oberstes Prinzip derselben ist der Idee des absoluten Gottes als des Einen . . . diesem Absolute gegenüber fällt alles, was nicht Er ist, in die Reihe des Erschaffenen, auch der Sohn Gottes . . . Wenn schon aber ein Geschöpf, ist der Sohn doch nicht wie ein Glied in der Reihe der Geschöpfe . . . er ist, sittlich . . . und metaphysisch (emphasis - Böhringer). . . angesehen, das erste der Geschöpfe. . .". A little earlier, Voigt, who wrote deliberately with the intention of presenting Athanasius as an orthodox



contention, that He was a *κρίσμα* or *ποίημα*. It is most important

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Protestant (and Lutheran at that), said (Die Lehre des Athanasius von Alexandrien . . ., 191-249), in the midst of the general rationalistic type of account, that Arianism was the result of a neglect of Scripture (loc. cit. 192), and (194 ff.) more or less rejected Möhler and Baur, whose version of the principle he saw as being that the only unity between God and man was ethical. Atzberger (op. cit. 32-33) excludes all these, that is, in his own description, Möhler's "deistische-dialektische Element", and Voigt's false principle of knowledge; Baur's combination of ethicism and separation of God from the world is better, but it, to Atzberger, reads too much of 18th century rationalism into Arius. His positive conclusions (op. cit. 78ff., are that Arianism involves a Two-Logos doctrine such as Athanasius criticised in Asterius (which the author, disagreeing, feels should not be considered a primary element), and that it is due to a breach of the necessary organic connection between "die Speculative" and "die Positive" - argued like a good Thomist! (p. 80). "Das will es sagen, wenn man die heidnische Logosidee mit dem historischen Christus verband. In der falschen Verbindung dieser zwei Elemente wurzelten damals alle Häresien." - a more circumstantial account, though not developed sufficiently. The remaining accounts of Arianism all emphasise rational monotheism as the constitutive principle. Incidentally, one might add, at the very end, that the statement of Möhler, op. cit. 179, that Arianism is "notwendig Pelagianismus", is a misstatement about an important aspect of Arianism, but it fits in with the general picture, and the truth about Arianism at this point is one of its most extraordinarily interesting paradoxes, the significance of which we are in a position to appreciate now, but not the Möhler of 1827 or 1844.

Interpreted at their worst, all these accounts fundamentally adhere to the rationalist and rational monotheist version of the basic principle of Arianism. But even when interpreted in meliorem partem, the thing that NONE of these accounts do justice to is the fact that Arianism was, in a perverse way, actually Christocentric, or rather Logocentric (in the sense of the pre-existent Christ). This is the terrible thing about it. In a movement like Arianism, there is one infallible test. All the alliterative and assonant slogans - for that is what they were - in Arianism refer, not to the majesty of the Father, but to the creaturehood of the Son. This is the real centre of interest, and the other sort of argument predominates only in its apologetic literature (if anywhere). The contrast with Islam is most striking. With the barely possible exception of the greatest instance of all (There is One God and Mohammed is his Prophet), all the corresponding material refers to Allah alone.



here to distinguish the Arians from the people, like say Eusebius of Caesarea when he wrote to Euphrasion, who were in genuine intellectual difficulties over the notion of sonship, specifically the fact that human sons are antedated by their parents. But there is all the difference in the world between the audible uncertainty of Eusebius of Caesarea, and the brazen attempts of the Arians to prove that the whole notion of a Son of God the Father is absurd. Surely the Arians, if they used the concept of Sonship at all, would have known, however dimly, that a son consists of the essence of his parents, in the sense in which something made by those same parents might make in their workshop consists of an essence other than that of the parents themselves, or the creatures of nothing! Even on the difficulty of the analogy between human and Divine Sonship, the Arians knew enough about God's creatio ex nihilo and how radically it differed from anything that could be called creation by man! That is, if their real difficulty was of this character. This could have impelled to the stage of Eusebius of Caesarea, but no further. When it came to the point of positively exulting in the absurdity of the idea of a Son of the Father, saying with the greatest possible emphasis and publicity that "Son" was an empty honorific title that really meant "creature" and using all the resources of the jingle slogan and the popular song to spread this doctrine, with a thoroughness and an originality that are still unique in history, one is really beyond the stage of intellectual difficulties. There must have been other factors at work. We have already seen that the Scriptural exegesis was of such a character as to suggest some irresistible subconscious drive in the direction of this heretical conclusion, which carried them to the very



edge of atheism. The constitutive feature of Arianism was a blind conviction that the Logos was a creature, to which one must add an equally blind refusal to listen to any evidence to the contrary, including most emphatically Scripture. The only thing that remains to be added is that, in spite of wishing to give the Logos-Son absolute pre-eminence, the Arians went so far as to insist that He was a creature in exactly the same way in which other things were creatures, which they maintained to the point of pulling their whole system apart.

(5) This basic Arian position was supported by an extremely rational form of monotheism. But it is important to notice again just how rationalistic and contentless the Arian form of monotheism is. Nothing is more remarkable than the frequency with which Athanasius remarks that the Arians teach the transcendence of the Father, not to honour the Father, but to dishonour the Son.<sup>(170)</sup> Athanasius never appears to be answering a respectable theology of the Absolutely Transcendent Father, whether of a positive or apophatic nature, and indeed the Arian theology of the Father, as regards content, compares very unfavourably with the sort of unitarian theology later elaborated by Mohammed.<sup>(170)</sup> This is a sure sign that the locus theologicus which was the real centre of interest of Arianism was the creaturely Second-Person rather than the First. If it had been the First Person, the Arians would have developed something much closer to Islam, and, if it is objected that this is speculating too much on what was then future, they would have had the doctrine of Paul of Samosata to revive. No heretics would have regarded Paulianism with such aversion unless their real centre of interest had been the Pre-Incarnate Second Person. Thus, the judgment of Athanasius cited above is not unfair special

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(170) See end of footnote (169) above. See De Decr. 29:469D and 30:472D, and C.A. I. 30:13A and 33:80C, where this statement is made directly in the context of the *ἀποκρίσις*, which is the natural context. But it is implicit in the whole Corpus of Athanasian writings.

pleading, but the innermost truth about the heresy.

(6) What was the Arian doctrine of the Second Person?

There is a widespread idea that the Arians were essentially what might be called Son-theologians, with Athanasius remaining on their own ground in this regard, and that the appearance of the Arian heresy marks, of itself, the watershed between the later Son-theology and the earlier Logos-theology which was predominant in the earlier Origenism, from Origen himself to his principal Nicene successor, Eusebius of Caesarea, and also, in a different way, in the tradition represented by Marcellus of Ancyra. This interpretation was first adopted by Gwatkin in his statement that, with reference to the substitution of "Son" as the chief title of the Second Person in the final Creed of Nicaea, as compared with "Logos" in the Creed of Caesarea, the Council of Nicaea, if they had divided on the question, which they did not, would have divided in a curious way, with Eusebius of Caesarea and Marcellus of Ancyra supporting Logos and Arius and Athanasius (or the voting members of their parties) supporting Son.<sup>(171)</sup> Lately, this position has been definitively expressed by T.E. Pollard in the paper, "Logos and Son in Origen, Arius, and Athanasius", at the 1955 Patristic Congress,<sup>(172)</sup> being a summary of his unpublished doctoral thesis at the University of St. Andrew's. The author feels that the conclusions of this paper are quite wrong as they affect both Arius and Athanasius. The latter, in his final and mature theology, is not a "Son" theologian, but in a sort of equilibrium between Logos and Son.

(171) "Studies in Arianism" p. 45.

(172) Published (in English) in "Texte und Untersuchungen" 64 (1957) pp. 282-288.



On the other the case of Arius is much more complex, and the error in the position as presented by Pollard and others is most instructive if examined carefully. It is true that, in the extract from Arian writings cited by Athanasius at the beginning of De Decr. 6, it is stated that the Second Person, under the name Son, is only improperly or by convention, *καταχρηστικῶς*, called Logos and certain other titles, as Pollard rightly quotes, building much of his case upon this. Similarly, it appears that the sections, De Decr. 15-17 (called by Newman in his sectional headings, "Proof of the Catholic Sense of the word 'Son' ") and C. Ar. I: 11-22, are what Newman says that the first one is, a vindication of the orthodox and for that matter true sense of the word "Son" against the Arian sense in which it was merely an honorific term for "creature". But one need go no further than Pollard's own paper to see the difficulties of this line of approach. He says immediately afterwards that the difficulties of understanding the matter become immeasurably greater when it is remembered that, not only did the Arians say that the Son was only improperly Logos, but that his title "Son" was an equally great impropriety. Pollard was hasty in not seeing that this difficulty demanded a deeper examination of the whole problem, but others, including Gwatkin and Newman, would have reached the same impasse if they had concentrated as thoroughly and expressed themselves as clearly on this question. The fact that this difficulty could arise so readily - and after all Pollard handled the evidence with complete fidelity - indicates that the difficulty is one in Arianism itself, and that the Arians tangled themselves in it by trying to express something which was not immediately obvious or expressible in the categories of thought available at the time.

The solution that is being proposed here is that, if the

Arian Name for the Second Person was Son, the Description, in terms of Bertrand Russell's logic,<sup>(173)</sup> is Logos. We have already explained why we feel that the Arians were not really interested in the Sonship of the Second Person to the Father, and another reason can be added, that is, that there is no trace in the Arian controversy of any reference to John 3: 16. The Arians did not use it, and the only reference in Athanasius is in Athan. dub. Or. IV C. Ar. 18, where it is no more than cited as a Scriptural proof of the formal point of the personal identity of the Son and the Logos. This is a clear indication that the Arians never used it, since even if the Fourth Oration is admitted as genuine, the material in the relevant section is directed against Marcellus or his followers. This is a clear indication that the Arians never used this text. And the argument that God gave His only-begotten Son as a sacrifice for us; all sacrifices must be creaturely; therefore the Son must be a creature; is so much a trump card that it is inconceivable that the Arians would have missed it, if they had really had their heart on the title Son as a description and not merely as a proper noun. Similarly, if Athanasius had had to answer this sort of Arianism, he would have had to produce the full Anselmic soteriology and Christology, according to which Christ must be God in order to make the sacrifice fully efficacious for the enormity of sin, which shares negatively in the very infinity of God; therefore, in a real sense, it would have to be God Himself Who was sacrificed. There is more of this element, or of tendency in that direction, both in the "De Incarnatione" and in the "Contra Arianos" I-III, <sup>than is usually allowed</sup> but, to Western ears anyway and probably in fact, there is, in

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(173) "Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description,"  
Pr. R. Arist. Soc. 1910-11  
"On Denoting" Mind 1905.  
Principles of Mathematics. Pt. I.



the later writing, a perceptible retreat from Anselm in the later writings as compared with the early anti-Arian work, even where Athanasius is discussing the Passion. Here, the primary interest of Athanasius is in the Sufferings as a special case of the *παθή* of created reality as such.<sup>(174)</sup> This may be a sign of a defect in Athanasius. It is certainly a sign that Arians had no soteriological interest in the sense in which soteriology plays its vital role in Christian theology, especially Western theology. It is also an additional sign that the Arians had no regular and systematic exegesis.

On the other hand, the main interest of the Arians, except insofar as it was not purely negative, was in the cosmological relations of the Logos. When Athanasius is answering the contention of, say, Eusebius of Nicomedia that creation is what it is through participation in the Son, while the Son in the same way partakes of the Father,<sup>(175)</sup> or the contention of Asterius, that there must be a Mediator, not, be it noted, for salvation, but for creation, and that this Mediator must be, not Very God and Very Man, but a special kind of creature, or when Athanasius points out that the whole Arian logic falls down on the *πρῶτος* argument;<sup>(176)</sup> or, perhaps most significant of all, that all creatures are essentially on the same footing and that none of them can have the ultimate supremacy that the Arians postulated for the Second Person,<sup>(177)</sup> he is dealing with extant Arian ways of thinking. For that reason, he can restrict himself to pointing out the fallacies in their reasoning. These issues are all cosmological issues. One should not be deceived by the enormously greater extent of the sections on soteriology, Christology<sup>and</sup> exegesis which comprise the last five-sixths of C. Ar. I-III. What this really shows is that

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(174) C. Ar. III: 54-57.

(175) De Decr. 9-10.

(176) De Decr. 8 C. Ar. II: 24-26.

(177) C. Ar. II: 28-30.

Athanasius is NOT opposing Arian ways of thinking, since he has had to develop the subject from the very outset. However, this will be further studied in the section below. In conclusion, the real focus of interest of the Arians was in the Second Person as Logos, with reference to the cosmological relations of the Logos.

A closer examination reveals that there is sufficient reason why the Arians did not use the title Logos but preferred that of Son - though not without such ruthless qualifications which amounted to butchery. It is that they wanted a title that expressed the relations of the Second Person to the Father, which was for them the relation of absolute creaturehood. Now, if they had used the title of Logos, the inevitable formulation would have been "Logos of God". Perhaps this would pass muster on a strictly Philonic interpretation of Logos, but there is another Greek tradition, at least as important, according to which the Logos of X is more ultimate and more fundamental than X.<sup>(178)</sup> For example, there is the Heraclitean and Stoic Logos, and in fact this is the whole basis of the Greek use of Logos for The Ultimate. Perhaps the most striking instance of all is at the end of Plato's "Theaetetus" (179) - a use which goes back to Pythagoras on one hand, and the

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(178) The disagreement with Kittel's "Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament," article Logos, etc., p. 90 f., is deliberate. In this portion of the article, the contributor, by assuming that  $\aleph$ , that which is at the back of, is etymologically related to  $\aleph$ , word (= Logos), a step by no means unchallenged by scholars, attributes to the Hebrew the notion that the  $\aleph$  of a thing is its background, or inner significance. However accurate this is for the Hebrew, this view, especially in its final form, is very close to what is here presented as an important Greek meaning of the word Logos, which, for some reason or other which one hopes is an accidental result of the way in which the Dictionary was compiled, never received sufficient emphasis in the portions of the article that dealt with Classical Greek.

(179) 187 to end.



etymology of Logos on the other, with its basic reference to the act of picking things up one after the other, and thence to counting.<sup>(180)</sup>

The Platonic Socrates proposes an ultimate explanation of knowledge of a complex entity in terms of knowledge of its structure in terms of simple units, especially numerical units. This breaks down at once on the fact that, on this basis, we cannot have any real knowledge of the units themselves, so that we cannot describe false arrangements of these units, e.g. false arithmetic of the type,  $7 + 5 = 11$ ;<sup>(181)</sup> or the units must have such things as rules for their use, relations among themselves, or even their own structure, which must reintroduce the same complexity at that stage. But the point is that this structure in terms of units is called the Logos of the thing, and whether it is conceived in this etymological, Pythagorean way, or as Logos in the sense of explanation, the Logos of a thing was patently held to be more ultimate than the thing of which it is the Logos.

Athanasius quite often argues as if he is using such a point as this, which is so obvious that it needs no elaboration. Therefore, although there was of course no question of "Logos of God" being more ultimate than "God", that is, the Father, this formulation could not have been used to describe an entity which was, in the direct sense, less ultimate than the Father. Other similar titles, such as Wisdom, would not have had the same extreme objection, but its auditors would tend to consider it as a Platonic form, and therefore for that reason more ultimate than that of which it is Wisdom. Also, these and others, like "Power", carried a notion of immateriality, and the close association between the distinction Creator-Creature and that between

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(180) See Liddell and Scott, Logos, and Kittel, loc. cit. pp. 76-78.

(181) loc. cit. 196.

Immaterial and Material respectively, would have made all these titles doubly difficult. For that reason, the Arians had to take the title Son, in spite of all its serious objections, and interpret it in its own sense, in spite of the fact that this reinterpretation was in the end an even greater act of butchery than it would have been with any other term. At least, this title would suggest an entity that was not co-eternal with the Father, unless the right analogical correction had been made. But this did not affect the fact that for the Arians the content of the Son's title was Logos, cosmologically considered. Of course, the reason for all this paradox was that for the whole previous six generations of Logos Christology as well as for all non-Christian Logos- theologies and philosophies, the Logos had been really, in the strict sense, not the Logos of God, but the Logos of the Cosmos. In fact, there is no place where this shows more clearly than in the objective natural theology of Athanasius's "Contra Gentes" and in the tradition which that work reveals. Incidentally, the corresponding title "Son of the Cosmos" would have been meaningless to a Greek, and if not meaningless to a Jew would have meant something different.<sup>(182)</sup> One of the main works of Athanasius in his attack on Arianism is to break this mischievous correlation between the Logos and the Cosmos, and the importance which he attaches to this question of correlation,<sup>(183)</sup> in the exact sense in which this term is used, among recent theologians, by Paul Tillich, suggests that this was a really serious issue.

(7) In the above analysis of the true Arian doctrine of the Son, we have already touched on - not the deficiency in, but the

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(182) Probably "a worldly man".

(183) De Decr. 28-31 and C. Ar. I: 30-34; see above pp. 305-6.



virtually complete absence of any other doctrine in Arianism apart from those directly connected with the bald assertion that the Logos is a creature. Let us take, as the three test cases, the Doctrines of the Holy Spirit, Christology, and the Atonement. Arius of course said that there were Three Hypostases in the Trinity that differed from each other *ad infinitum*,<sup>(184)</sup> which if anything means that the Spirit is a creature, or even a creature infinitely subordinated to the Son. The late Arian Eunomius (fl. 356+) said the same thing (Lib. Apologeticus 25). But it appears that this doctrine played no more than a formal part in Arianism, and this is clear by Athanasius's handling of it. It will be shown that it almost crept back into theology by stealth in Athanasius, and that the context in which it did so was the need to account for man's participation in what is naturally God's, now that the old correlation between the Logos and creatures,<sup>(185)</sup> especially human rationality, had had to go. In other words, the cause for all the references to the Spirit before the rise of the Tropici, was entirely within the theology that Athanasius evolved in his reply to Arianism, and had nothing to do with Arianism at all. Christology is certainly the most striking case of all, in view of what is often assumed to be the nature of Arianism. There is a complete absence of anything that corresponds to the locus theologicus which gave rise to the Apollinarian, Nestorian, and Eutychian heresies, as well as to the Council of Chalcedon. We have already discussed in full the evidence for and against the absence of the human soul of Christ, in the Apollinarian sense, as a constituent feature of Arianism, at any rate before a late stage, and come to the conclusion

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(184) See "Thalia" extract in De Syn. 15.

(185) See below, pp. 654-6, 1099-1100.

that it was not such a feature. Similarly, when Athanasius is discussing Christology, that is, the Humanity of Christ, in the great section of the "Contra Arianos" from I:37 to III:58, he is not really confuting any Arian doctrine. In fact, the very length of this section is because he had to elaborate the whole doctrine of the Humanity of Christ from A to Z ab ovo, to give the correct theological account of the whole group of Scriptural passages which the Arians wasted in their vain effort to prove that the Second Person, as a being of one nature, was a creature. The fact that <sup>Athanasius</sup> ~~Arius~~ did so at the very time that was, as a brute fact, the great watershed between Arianism and the period dominated by the classical Christological heresies, is final proof of the significance and originality of this section, and the impact of its material on theological thought. Athanasius never had to discuss any Christological statement beyond the bald statement that "He is a creature, etc.". The issue of two normally incompatible natures in Christ never arose for them; in fact, it could only arise for theologians who were absolutely convinced of the absolute gulf between God and creaturely reality, and also that Christ is both God and Man. For the Arians, He is a creature, and that was the end of it. Of course, there was another sense in which the Christological or a sort of para-Christological issue could, and should, yet have arisen for them, since there would still be a problem of how the Creator and Sustainer of all creation, even if He was a creature, could become incarnate in a part, and often a very subordinate part, of creation. That is, they did not escape the problem, finitum non capax infiniti. There were three reasons; first, for the reason that we have just explained, they did not feel the full piquancy of the paradox; secondly, they were so keen on ransacking Scripture for proofs of their own



contentions that they did not notice the problems raised by their own arguments; and finally, this is the best proof of all that the Arians really gave their minds to the cosmological relationships of the Pre-Incarnate Logos to the exclusion of everything else; without this last reason the other two would have been ineffective. C. Ar. II: 164A is referred to by Robertson in his Notes, not inaptly, as "One of the few passages in which Athanasius glances at the Arian Christology." The passage concerned is: "If then indeed the Lord did not become man, let the Arians fight about it (sc. exegesis of Heb. 3:2); but if the 'Logos became flesh', what ought to have been said about Him when He became man, but, 'who was faithful to Him that made Him', . . ." The passage in question is about Arian Christology only in the sense in which it has been defined above, and the fact that Robertson chose this passage for this note shows that Athanasius never had to deal with Arian Christology in any other sense. At the end of the Arian controversy, in Ep. ad Adelphium 1, Athanasius refers to a new group of heretics whom he describes as having the tenets of the Arians, but who have gone one step worse than classical Arianism, in that while classical Arianism gave its assent to the Incarnation, they denied not only the Deity of the Logos, but also His appearances in the flesh. If the classical Arians ever did have a formal doctrine of the Incarnation, it must have been very formal and empty, since their whole exegesis was based on a wanton ignoring of the distinction between the Pre-existent Son and His Flesh or humanity; even their use of the Synoptic Texts (no difference can be detected in their use of these and of the texts elsewhere, in the treatment of the issues by Athanasius), was simply the culminating point of their impudence. Thus, there is no Christology in classical Arianism in the usual sense.

The same general points apply to soteriology, and indeed they have already been made with reference to soteriology. It only remains to be added, as evidence, that the Arian catena of Synoptic texts, as in C. Ar. III: 26-58, actually stops short of Crucifixion itself, extending only up to the Cry of Dereliction; the Arians were perhaps fortunate that they did not try to get as far as the Atoning Death on the Cross, because any attempt to use this, granted their basic premises, would have produced a sheer horror of a theology (?) which would have in comparison made Marcion look like Irenaeus.

To sum up, it appears that Arianism is quite exceptional, even for a unitary creed, even in the age when the method of loci theologici had not been invented or was being used only in direct expositions of the creeds, in its complete concentration on the one doctrine which, for itself, was the thing that mattered. Indeed, its concentration almost approached monomania, and we can tell from Athanasius's treatment that the monomania was really in the mind of the Arians and not an artefact produced by any dishonest suppressions by the orthodox. If theology is really a unity even when and though full justice must be done to its diversity, any error in the place where the Arians erred will inevitably produce errors everywhere else - as Athanasius says in so many words, in principle.<sup>(186)</sup> Thus, it would have paid the orthodox theologians either to point out the secondary errors in detail, or, if the Arians were by some mischance correct in the other places, the absurdity and crass illogicality of grafting these secondary truths on to the primary error. The fact that arguments of this kind in circumstantial detail almost never occur in Athanasius is proof that the Arian theology is unitary in a far more absolute way than, for instance, the theology of Athanasius

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(186) See C. Ar. I: 8, where Athanasius makes the point with reference to a large number of topics, but without giving any Arian examples.



himself which is often and correctly taken as one of the supreme examples of the unitary principle; in fact, this principle is carried in Arianism almost to the point of parody.

(8) The final positive characteristic of Arianism, which we have left to last because it most clearly shows the innermost heart and soul of the doctrine, is that it was virtually the only belief, in the days before modern atheism, to formulate systematically the idea that there were certain statements which were *prima facie* truths about God but which were really truths about creatures and creaturely reality. There were, in the ancient classical world, the instances of Xenophanes, with his satirical criticism of traditional Greek polytheistic religion, and, in a different way, the criticisms of the Platonic Socrates, the Plato of the later books of the "Republic", and perhaps the Athenian Sophists against the same target; and there was the more definite atheism of Lucretius, as being an extreme case of the Epicurean School as a whole. But there are two things which are absolutely unique in ancient times; firstly, the systematic way in which the principle was applied, and secondly, the fact that it was applied in a highly unitary system, and, what is more, applied to the entity that was the systematic focus of the unity (or, at least, shared the focus with God the Father). This principle was applied in two ways, analogy and Scriptural exegesis. We have already seen, and we shall see again, that Arian argument, and possibly also the innermost logic of Arian thought, was based on the idea that human categories are to be applied to God. This was especially the case with the idea of Sonship, and the human characteristic of the temporal priority of Father over son was applied to God even if the cost was

the ruination of the whole notion; the Second Person can only be the Power of God and the Wisdom of God in the same way as men or even locusts are the power of God;<sup>(187)</sup> the unity of Father and Son cannot be greater than that which Christ envisaged between man and God.<sup>(188)</sup> The Arians were not even held up by the logical difficulties of applying analogies from plural realities to a unique being, creaturely or otherwise. It was the same with Arian exegesis. We have already noticed that it can only be explained as the manifestation of some perverse principle which drove the Arians to their exegetical conclusions regardless of context or even of the plain meaning of the words. We can now see that the principle was, here as before, the absolute supremacy of creaturely reality over Divine reality as a hermeneutic law. It was not even as if they ignored the passages which, by any normal exegesis, referred unquestionably to Christ as God. These were also interpreted as referring to creatures and creaturely reality. We can admire the intellectual integrity of the Arians in this respect, but it makes their theological crime immeasurably more serious. The fact that they were prepared to handle even the passages of Scripture that were apparently unfavourable to them puts to shame the average practitioner of the proof-text method. But it means that Athanasius is quite right to point out that if this principle is needed in the exegesis of passages concerning God the Son, why should it not equally apply to the Father?<sup>(189)</sup> In no other respect were the Arians so startlingly modern as in their use of the principle that what were apparently truths about God are really truths about

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(187) See the citations from Asterius in De Syn. 18-19 and elsewhere.

(188) See C. Ar. III: 10 and following.

(189) The passages are too numerous to be cited.



creatures.<sup>(190)</sup> Others might divinise creatures, but it was left to the Arians to reduce soundly and completely to the rank of creature One Whom earlier theology had always regarded, even at its most obtuse, as being at least very nearly God (for argument's sake). There was nothing that closely corresponded to this in classical culture, and nothing that corresponded in any way in three centuries; and in terms of what followed the Arians remained absolutely unique for a millennium and a half.

The end result of this survey is that Arianism appears as a doctrine that is strongly cosmological and unitary in outlook, but which nevertheless maintains, with the most extreme fanaticism, that the principal cosmological entity is in the most absolute sense a creature, as distinct from God; when we come to examine it in relation to all its predecessors, not least Christian truth, we find that there is no true precursor, but that in all cases there is this peculiar indirect and paradoxical relationship. This appears at first sight to be absolutely unique in history. But on a further examination we find that there is one other doctrine of just this character. There is indeed one big difference between this doctrine and Arianism, which has hitherto distracted attention from their basic resemblance, but the author refuses to believe that this difference is of fundamental significance - not on his own authority, but on the authority, in advance, so to speak, of Athanasius himself! In some respects these two are alike; in others they are dialectically antithetical; but the author is convinced now that the resemblances and differences together form a most instructive comparison, and if

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(190) In this ~~Fel~~erbach, Marx, Freud, and Bultmann strikingly agree.

both doctrines are studied in relation to each other, a great deal about each that is often obscure will come into sharp focus.

The thesis which the author wishes to maintain is that the fundamental impulse of Arianism was identical with that of Marxism, that it was the form that Marxism took in an earlier age which was not ready for its more startling innovations, that Arianism has its true equivalent and culmination in Marxism, that the differences between them can be precisely accounted for by the differences in the environment, partly the secular environment but principally and decisively developments in Christian theology, that each doctrine throws light on the other, especially where it is held on ordinary reckoning to be contradictory and paradoxical, and, to show that the superiority is not all on one side, that there are some interests close to the heart of Marxism that are better expressed by Arius than by Marx himself; finally, that when Athanasius predicted that the Arians would end by denying the Father too, what he saw in his nightmares was not Julian in the fourth century but Marx and Lenin in the <sup>nineteenth and</sup> twentieth; in any case, Athanasius saw, with incredible far-sightedness, that any attempt to combine what might be called the internal logic of Arianism with the traditional Christian and Trinitarian orthodoxy and above all liturgy, would immediately result in a position which - on Athanasius's own description of it! - is literally identical with that of Marx, and perhaps even more so, Feuerbach. Even if this hypothesis is far-fetched, it is certainly true that both Arianism and Marxism are fanatical reactions against idealist tendencies in philosophy and religion, especially idealist misunderstandings and perversions of the Doctrine of God the Creator -



with the exception in each case that the reaction stops short of crude materialism, maintaining its impetus and one might almost say, power of fascination, by preserving the most important and fascinating feature of the position that it attacked, its unitary sense.

For one thing, there are too many incidental resemblances between Marxism and Arianism to be entirely accidental. There is the bare fact of history that both movements originated in the centre of culture, philosophy, and especially what may be called Christian civilisation - Alexandrian Egypt was the Germany of the Fourth century - and spread centrifugally from this centre to, in the case of Arianism, finish as the religion of the Teutonic barbarians, a course analogous to the spread of Marxism into what was, on the standards of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the periphery of civilisation. Bishop Ulfilas was the Mao Tse Tung of the Arian revolution. The other thing is the militant proletarianism of the Arians, and especially Arius himself, of which Athanasius complains so eloquently in C. Ar. I: 22.<sup>(191)</sup> In a manner, at any rate, which was felt to be a pointed contrast with the tradition of the church, they went out of their way to make converts among the proletariat, by methods which appealed to their own minds, at whatever cost to reverence or truth, the accosting of people in the market place, the earthy analogies so plausibly misused, the imitation popular songs like the typical Thalia, the jingle slogans (in general, all the Arian statements appear to have been designed for the maximum of this effect), probably, the whole atmosphere of the slick advertiser or agitator, which the Church found thoroughly novel and odious. Above all, there seems to have been a deliberate policy of acquiring recruits among the proletariat of the market place. While following this line in his dealings, Arius showed a very high level of intellectual sophistication, a combination that is one of the rarest in

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(191) See also Newman's notes on this chapter for further historical references.

history at any time before the twentieth century. The only people who can be entertained as rivals in this particular are Iamblichus the Stoic of Pergamum, the Rousseauists and French Revolutionaries, and Karl Marx and his followers; and of these Marx alone can rival Arius as a para-theologian. In fact, the proletarianism of Arius, in many ways, makes that of Marx and the Communist movement in general look by comparison theoretical, in their own pejorative sense. The latter have not, after all, as Arius did, exploited the sexy "pop"-song<sup>(192)</sup> and its rhythms, the sea-shanty, or other similar phenomena,<sup>(193)</sup> to propagate their views. Arius, in a way still unique, combined the atmosphere of Marx with that of the modern rock-'n-roll singer, proletarianism at its best and at its worst. The proletarian movement in Christianity is a most fascinating study, which will abundantly repay much more thorough investigation than it has received, although it would be quite impossible to do that here. There is no doubt that there is such a tradition or type of tradition, and, however much it is based in the Bible and represents an emphasis that other forms of Christianity have culpably neglected, the fact remains that it has either been a permanent opposition party within Christianity, or else frankly heretical; in fact, since at least Marx it has separated altogether from Christianity. After the New Testament anyway, proletarianism was first explicitly propounded by Marcion, with his doctrine that salvation was to come to Cain, the Sodomites, etc., and damnation to the leaders of the Old Testament like Abel, Moses, etc.<sup>(194)</sup>

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(192) This is, after all, what Thaliae really were.

(193) See Philostorgius II: 2.

(194) See Irenaeus. Adv. Haer. Book I: ch. 27.



Then after a long period underground, probably in various Montanist and Manichaean movements, we find the same sort of thing once again on the surface in Joachim of Flora and the Fraticelli, a thousand years after Marcion, at which stage the tradition becomes traceable with sufficient continuity right to the French Revolution, Hegel, and Marx. At this point it became separated from its Christian roots, and has been the scourge of mankind ever since. It is interesting to observe Arius in the same line. There does not appear to be any obvious necessary connection between Arius and Marcion - unless possibly it derives from the fact that the Logos Christology, in its philosophical, phil-Hellenic, and idealist form was almost certainly an over-emphasis on God the Creator as a reaction against Marcion - something which the average theological history strangely neglects - and likewise became the favourite doctrine among the intellectual upper class of the Church; for both these reasons, anybody like Arius who was militantly reacting against this would tend to drop back to Marcionite attitudes. One would have to say attitudes rather than ways of thought; as doctrines Arianism and Marcionitism have little in common.

Before we go any further, we must correct a very common error in the interpretation of Marxism, that is, the notion that it was merely a species of common or garden materialism à la Haeckel, a misconception that has deceived even such an acute observer as Karl Barth.<sup>(195)</sup> On this basis, it is impossible to make anything but unintelligible nonsense of this most significant philosophy. It can only be understood as a paradoxical and indirect continuation of, or reaction from, Hegelianism, by way of that underrated intermediary, Feuerbach; the effect was to continue the Hegelian tradition in many ways, while in other ways, Hegel was completely inverted.<sup>(196)</sup> The

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(195) See Ch. Dogm. Vol. III. Pt. II pp. 387 ff.

(196) This will be fully treated, with references, in Appx.

best place to begin the study of Marxism is not even Hegel's Logic, but the Philosophy of Religion. Here, Hegel accepts Christianity as the Absolute Religion, or rather, as the de facto religion which, at the then present moment, expresses par excellence the Absolute Religion, albeit in an imperfect and semi-mythological form. The crown of Hegelian religion is in two doctrines; that Absolute Reason (the equivalent of God the Father) postulates what He is not and dirempts Himself therein, producing as his Antithesis His exact image (the equivalent of the Son, but actually the World; this is the meaning of *Creatio per Verbum*); the Synthesis is Spirit, or Absolute Reality. (The whole is, for Hegel, the true and - dare we say it - demythologized equivalent of the Doctrine of the Trinity). Secondly, and even more important, all faith and all religion culminate and find their truth in the absolute identity of human and divine nature; Jesus Christ is the person in whom this identity was first manifested in perfect self-consciousness. (This is the demythologized equivalent of the orthodox Christology). Why Hegel said this is not quite clear, but we might hazard a guess that this is the inevitable result of all natural theology, of which Hegelianism is the Apotheosis (in a strictly derived and non-etymological sense!); and that God is absolute, religiously, by definition, and that Reason (i.e. for Hegel, human essence) is also absolute, philosophically, by definition, and if anyone objects that one is here identifying Reason as something formal with Reason as a sort of pantheistic Substance, the answer is simply that Hegelianism is what one gets when this distinction is ignored, and in fact, it depends on this distinction not being made.<sup>(197)</sup> The resemblance between Hegelianism and the Stoic-Heraclitean Logos doctrine

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(197) As is evident from the very beginning of Hegel's "Logic".



is obvious; in fact, Hegelianism is the modern revival of Greek philosophy, at a very much higher level of sophistication, complexity, and organisation, together with certain elements, like history, which were not Hellenic interests but which Hegel owed to the intervening Christian Faith. With the situation as it was, it only required an almost negligible modification by Feuerbach<sup>(198)</sup> to institute one of the great revolutions in philosophical history. He only had to point out, if there is an ultimate identity between humanity and deity, what is "God" but the highest essence of man? And what motive can one have for belief in any other sort of god, that is, a god who is in any way distinct from man, but man's own imperfection and alienation from his own highest essence? These arguments are already present, in only a very slightly different form, in Hegel himself. When we bear this in mind, we can see that what Marx did was to repeat Feuerbach's rubbing off of the top stage, at one stage lower. Feuerbach left the highest essence of humanity as the Absolute, in the position occupied by Deity in the Hegelian philosophy of religion. What Marx is really saying, in the Theses on Feuerbach, the German Ideology, and other similar writings, is really that this highest level is likewise only relevant insofar as it can be identified with the next lower level - the world of things. This is the reason for the emphasis on economics in Marxism - that it is the field, par excellence, where the essence of man and the essence of things are, in Hegelian terms, absolutely identical, in the same way in which, for Hegelianism, human and divine natures were regarded as identical. But, on the other hand, what might be described as the Hegelian belief in the Logos is absolutely unimpaired in Feuerbach and

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(198) The most famous work of Feuerbach is his "Wesen des Christentums", (E.T. "Essence of Christianity").

certainly in Marx, which accounts for the decisively monistic element in Marxism, and also for the persistence and even intensification of the Hegelian progressivism and historicism. In fact, the Arian statement that the Logos (because, as we have shown above, this is the title for the Second Person that was really intended) was a creature expresses the heart and soul of Marxism much more clearly than anything in Marx or any other Marxist, and in a form which enables one much better to make sense of what are usually regarded as the paradoxes of Marxism. It is also the exact formal equivalent of Marx's combination of atheism and monism.

The great difference between Arianism, at the stage that we know, and Marxism is that the former still took the name of God the Father. On the other hand, the practical emphasis was so much on the creaturehood of the Son-Logos that we are entitled to ask how significant the Father really was for them. Nothing is more striking than the way in which Athanasius repeatedly minimises the significance of this relic of Christian faith. Even when he calls Arianism "Jewish", on the strength of this, he always makes it clear that he has in mind not Abraham and Moses, as if the Arians were comparable with the "foolish Galatians", but the Sadducees, those cynics whom our Lord refuted out of the Old Testament, and Caiaphas, in whom Jewry apostasised from its Lord. He repeatedly says that the arguments for Arianism are properly arguments for atheism, and we have seen how that worked out in the case of Athanasius of Anazarba; and he predicts, in season and out of season, that the Arians will end by denying the Father as well - not only in the sense of denying His paternity, but of denying His deity.<sup>(199)</sup> With the

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(199) This is rather different from the sort of statement that the Arian motive in having a Father in the first place was really to dishonour the Son. What Athanasius is saying in the relevant



example of modern atheism before us, it is dangerous to dismiss this as rabies theologorum. There are several possible reasons for this measure of disagreement between Arius and Marx, or rather, why Marx and Feuerbach were able to take to completion the process which we see, in very imperfect form, in Arius and the Arians. Firstly, as we have noticed and shall notice again below, the whole logical system of not only Marx but Hegel was so strange that it is not surprising that the Arians were slow to grasp it in full. There are two aspects to this question. One is the idea that the Absolute can be really progressive, the idea that came comparatively easily to Hegel and was expressed by the Hegelian doctrine of the Absolute progressively coming to self-consciousness. The combination of progressivism and historicism in Marx shows that in this regard he was still a Hegelian. As we shall show below, this corresponds precisely to the idea that the Logos was *ῥεπρόσ*. Now, this idea was shocking for the Greeks, as for almost everybody else. For them the Ultimate or Absolute was by its very essence unalterable, and any alteration, including progress in our modern familiar sense, could only be a property of creatures or dependent and non-ultimate realities. This is especially true of the

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passages, C. Ar. (in all cases): I: 18: 49A; 25: 64B; 29 end: 33: 80C: 35 end; 63 beginning, especially; II: 28: 205D-208A (if the Son is a creator by skill, one would have to say the same about the Father); 32 beg.; III: 7 beg.; 63 beg. (especially; the Father would exist also by counsel); 66: 464B (if the Son might not have been good, so might not the Father); is that the Arians were not denying or virtually denying only the Paternity of the Father in such a way as to leave the Deity, but the Deity as well, for the express reason that Scripture and faith compel us to say the same sort of thing about the Father as about the Son. Therefore (in disagreement with Newman's note on De Decr. 1, and on *ῥεπρόσ* in Vol. II of the 1881 ed. of "Select Treatises . . .") when Athanasius calls the Arians atheists, he means it, not only in the ancient sense of non-acceptance of the usual gods or of God in the usual way, but that it all but applied in the most literal modern sense.

Socratic dialogues of Plato, which as we have suggested were popular at that time. In the last analysis it was this that made the Arians baulk at attributing ultimacy to this Logos, and to preserve a "Father" who was for them in fact otiose except for being an abstractly unchangeable entity. But the fact remains that for the Arians this changeable and progressive Logos-Son was the COSMOLOGICAL ultimate, the Absolute compared with the cosmos, and it was on this basis that Athanasius criticised Arianism in C. Ar. II: 18-44; for this reason it was the creaturely Logos-Son that was really the significant Person for the Arians. They were, in a perverted sense, just as Christocentric as Barth, Calvin, or Athanasius himself ever were or ever claimed to be; it was this that made their theology so appalling. But the fact remains that, Hellenistic thought being what it was as distinct from modern Europe, it would have been impossible for a philosopher or theologian even to approach the Hegelian and Marxist doctrine of a progressive Absolute until they had already got to the stage of declaring that the Logos was a creature; that is, he could not be a Hegelian till he was already at the stage of Feuerbach. But Athanasius is intensely and unpleasantly surprised that such a doctrine is even thinkable, and the remarkable thing is not that Arius failed to anticipate Hegel and Marx but that he came as close as he did to doing so.

The same applies to the other great novelty of Arianism, which is very closely related to the above, but which is even more interesting and striking to a modern student. We have already analysed passages in which the Arians maintained that the Logos was  $\tau\epsilon\tau\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$  in the sense of being an ethical entity, and seen that the Arian treatment of this issue was so appallingly bad that the suggestion obtrudes itself irresistibly that the Arians were trying to express something that was



completely novel, and for which the philosophy and theology of their day provided no conceptual tools at all. Now, when we analyse C. Ar. I: 35, which Athanasius intends to be his definitive treatment of the idea of the Logos being *πρῶτος*, and which we shall quote in extenso below, we find that it concerns itself almost exclusively with *πρῶτος* in the sense, and the modern sense at that, of progressive. The author feels quite definitely that the thing that the Arians were trying to express, and could not, is the idea that a creature, that is, the Second Person as such, can be radically progressive. There is no doubt that Arius at any rate would have had to understand the progress of the Logos in this way. With Asterius, the case is much more uncertain; in fact, one of the things that Athanasius is pointing out when he attacks the doctrine of Asterius, that the Second Person, as Wisdom, was wise through participation in the impersonal Wisdom of God, is that this really undercuts this whole notion. It really undercuts the whole cosmological absoluteness of the Second Person and reduces Him really to the human level. But, to return to the issue at hand, no Greek could conceive the idea of radical progress. Change is essentially for them change and decay, and the only notion of progress was the biological growth which is inevitably followed by irreversible senescence and death, or at best one moment in a cyclic change. Likewise the idea of true radical progress is not Christian. Progress, as we find it in Scripture and in the theology of Irenaeus, is always progress and growth into the stature of the Perfect Man, the Humanity of Christ Who, being eternally God, has already come as Man in all His perfection. We can see then the novelty of the doctrine of radical progress in the creature, that is, a creature that progresses through something entirely within its own nature which cannot be simply

represented as a pre-existence of the perfect state which teleologically directs the progress, and once again we have to note the intense surprise in Athanasius that such a thing can be even conceived, let alone put down on paper. For, in spite of the efforts of Asterius and Arius himself to water down the logic of their position, the progress of the Logos-Son would have to be radical. They wished to have a Person who was a creature, but who progressed towards something formally and materially indistinguishable from perfection and ~~to~~ progress<sup>ed</sup> morally, ethically, and deliberately, at that. How could such progress be anything but radical if he has no real comprehension of the essence of the Father or even of his own essence as a creature of the Father? The amazing thing, once again, is that the Arians went as close as they did to anticipate not only Hegel but post-Hegelian evolutionism as we find it in Darwin and his successors. Any difference is due to the fact, that, for the reasons that we have given above, a Greek thinker could conceive radical progress in the creature as a possibility only after he had numbered the Logos-Son in that class, a sort of converse of the condition that we postulated in the last paragraph.

So much for the novelty of Arianism. The second possible reason for the differences between Arianism and Hegel-Marx is the great difference in the general environment of the two ages. It is almost a truism that the third and fourth centuries in the Graeco-Roman world were a period of a general loss of confidence in things human and material. The Roman Empire was in palpable decay, people's minds were turning more and more to a transcendent god, whether the True God or the gods of the mystery religions, and in philosophy the pantheistic and worldly Stoic Logos philosophy had been already



replaced by Neo-Platonism with its genuinely transcendent Absolute. Under these circumstances, it was only natural for the Arians to keep, in a formal way, the doctrine of a transcendent Father-God. On the other hand, the nineteenth century was a time of intoxication with material progress of science and man's state in the world, and to that extent a turning away from the transcendent. But this factor is as nothing compared with the differences in the Christian environment. In the days of Arius, the theology of the Church was not quite sure of the Trinitarian doctrine in its full sense. In the nineteenth century, the absolute equality and absolute unity of the Three Persons had been read, chanted, and proclaimed every Sunday in every Church for sixteen centuries. And what is more important still, it has been proclaimed that, in the most literal sense, God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, having taken upon Himself the form of a servant, . . . . Under these circumstances, the Arian solution, or rather, the position actually reached by the Arians, became obviously impossible. A "God" the Father utterly removed from the world had been put right out of court. Once the Logos had been accepted as a creature, there was no alternative but to go the whole distance to atheism. In this way, the various stages in the declension from idealistic Christianity to Marxist atheism happened in a different order in the fourth and nineteenth centuries, and at the earlier time what were later the first stages could not happen till the last stage had been consummated, and there were some stages that were never reached in the fourth century, but they are recognisably the same process.

To confirm this analysis of Arianism, we shall quote two lengthy extracts from the Contra Arianos I, which show that, whether



the above theory is too far-fetched for the intentions of Arianism or not, it is certainly true that Hegelianism and Marxism are what Athanasius saw in it, and that what Athanasius saw in his nightmares as the ultimate consequence of Arian ways of thought was, in fact, this modern foe of Christian Faith in the most literal sense. First, ch. 17, beginning at PG XXVI 48:

"Next, let them tell us - or rather, let them see from this the impiety (τὴν δυσσεβειάν) in saying, 'Once He was not,' and, 'He was not before His generation,' - for if the Logos does not co-exist with the Father eternally, the Triad would not be eternal, but would be a Monad at first, which would later become a Triad by accretion (ἐκ προδοθήκης), and as time went on, our knowledge of theology would, according to them, have increased and become established.<sup>(200)</sup> And further, if the Son is not the proper Offspring of the Father's Essence but has come to be ex nihilo, then ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων συνίσταται ἡ Τριάς<sup>(201)</sup> and there was once when the Triad was not, but there was rather a 'Monad; and at one time the Triad was deficient (ἐλλειπή) and at another time complete, that is, deficient before the Son came to be, but complete when He was in existence. And henceforth a thing originate is reckoned with the Creator, and what once did not exist is deemed to be God and is glorified along with Him Who ever is! And what is more serious, the Triad turns out to be unlike Itself (ἀνόμοιος ἑαυτῇ), consisting of distinct and alien natures and essences.<sup>(202)</sup> And this is the same as saying that the thing that holds the Triad together is in the creaturely sphere.<sup>(203)</sup> And what sort of religion (θεοσεβεία) is this which manages to be unlike itself, but which is in process of completion as time goes on, and is at one time not so, and at another time so? For probably it will receive another accession, and so on ad infinitum, since right from the very start it was constituted by

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(200) προϊόντος τοῦ χρόνου κατ' αὐτοὺς ἡύξησε καὶ συνέστη τῆς θεολογίας ἡ γνώσις.

(201) "of nothing the Triad consists." We have left the Greek original because modern English misses its force - the thing that holds the Triad together and enables it to stand up is - nothing!

(202) φύσεσι τε καὶ ταῖς οὐσίαις. γενητὴν τὴν τῆς Τριάδος εἰκότα.

(203) ~~ἐκ προδοθήκης ἐστὶν ἡ οὐσία~~. See above, n. 180. This time we have made the alteration in the English, to Newman's and Robertson's translation.



accretion<sup>(204)</sup>. And so undoubtedly it may decrease, since it is plain that what is added can be subtracted." If it is possible to confirm that Arianism, at any rate as seen by Athanasius, was really a foretaste of Hegel and Marx, this passage does it. What Athanasius is saying, with extreme and obvious surprise and sarcasm, is that Arius and his followers have found a new and really radical variety of progress and development, far better than an organism developing according to a pattern present even in the embryo; far better than the dilatation and contraction of Stoicism and theologians like Marcellus of Ancyra. What this new form of development is, is nothing less than progress by a thing taking into itself what it is not, and forming a synthesis with it. This is in fact a perfect description of the Hegelian logic and ontology. At least Athanasius is saying that this is the sort of thing that the Arians must be saying and meaning if they do not explicitly reject the Doctrine of the Trinity, which, we must always remember, played a vital part in the Church's liturgy and liturgical tradition long before it was deliberately and theologically articulated. This is another instance of what we have noted before; in the field of logic, ontology, and ontogeny too, the Hegelian principle, owing to its utter novelty, could not manifest itself in ancient times until the idealist axiology had already been repudiated, and in this respect the Arians had already arrived at the position of Feuerbach. In the nineteenth century these principles were able to emerge at a much earlier stage because of the intervention of centuries of Trinitarian theology, and especially of Joachim of Flora<sup>(205)</sup> and his successors over a period of 700 years; this latter gave Hegel a well-established tradition not only of progressivism but of a triadic rhythm, in a Trinitarian context too, which ultimately developed into the doctrine of Thesis, Antithesis, and Synthesis. But there is

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(204) Ἐκ πρὸς θήκης ἔδχε τὴν οὐρανὸν

(205) Joachim of Flora (1130-1202), is famous for his doctrine of the

another important point too that Athanasius makes. As long as the idealist axiology is accepted, the above system, although it goes much too far, is still consistent with one aspect anyway of true Christian faith, the elevation of the creature into a genuine sharing of the Divine life by grace. Athanasius is accusing the Arian principle of having the opposite consequences, in that it would involve God with creaturely life in such a way that the principle of unity in the resultant quasi-Trinity would be in the creaturely order. The implication of all this is that any further attempt to take the Doctrine of the Trinity seriously would simply degrade God the Father to the rank of creature, and thus go the whole distance to atheism in one blow. The Arians would be unable to avoid the consequences if pressed, even though there is no record come down to us of any actual hyper-Arian atheism - unless Julian the Apostate was in this class. To do so, they would have to restore the axiology of the earlier idealist forms of philosophical theology and (as regards the nineteenth century) of Hegel, and that would mean that they would lose their essential characteristic. Their very <sup>^</sup>raison d'être was the repudiation of all such idealism; the only two possible states were God as an abstract Creator and the state of being a creature, and the side to which they were overwhelmingly committed, practically, emotionally, and existentially, was the latter. They were in no position to reply effectively to the charges in the chapter quoted, and this whole extract is proof that, as Athanasius saw it, they had,

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Kingdom of the Father (from Abraham to the Incarnation) followed by the Kingdom of the Son (42 generations after the Incarnation on analogy of Matt. 1:17) followed by the Kingdom of the Spirit which he provisionally expected in A.D. 1260, taking a generation as 30 years. ~~For references, see~~  
**Bibliography.**



for all the differences in detail, already taken the decisive step identical to that taken later by Feuerbach, and which would, sooner or later, give rise to the same explicit conclusions.

Another section of the C. Ar. I which demands special attention in this connection is ch. 35, where the Arian doctrine that the Logos is *πρεπτός* is considered in detail. "As to their question *εἰ πρεπτός ἐστὶν ὁ λόγος*, it is superfluous to examine it; it is enough simply to write down what they say, and so to show their daring irreligion. . . ." After putting the question, in the Arian way, in the passage already cited above, Athanasius continues with his answer; "It is just part of their heresy to speak and think this way; for, when once they have concocted a god out of nothing and a created Son, of course they will select such terms as suitable to a creature. However . . . . what can be more loathsome (*μιαρώτερον*) than their doctrine? Is it not enough . . . . to make one stop one's ears from astonishment (*ξενιστόμενος*) at what these people are saying, as he hears novel words<sup>(206)</sup> which are blasphemous in their very nature and expression<sup>(207)</sup>. For if the Logos is *πρεπτός* and *ἀλλοιούμενος*, how will He stay<sup>(208)</sup> and what will be the end of His development?<sup>(209)</sup> Or how can the *πρεπτός* be like the *ἀσέπτος*? And how can he that has seen the Alterable (*τὸν πρεπτόν*) be deemed to have seen the Unalterable? To what state will He have to arrive, for one to be able to see the Father in Him<sup>(210)</sup> For it is clear that one would not always see the Father in Him, since the Son is always altering and has a changeable nature<sup>(211)</sup>. For the Father is unalterable and unchangeable (*ἀνἀλλοίωτος*), and is always in the same state and is the same<sup>(212)</sup> but if, as they hold, the Son is alterable, and not always the same, but is of an always changing nature, how can such a one be the Image of the Father, as He does not have the likeness of His

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- (206) Migne's note "Seguer. Gobler et Felck 1. ἐκείνοι λαλοῦσι, καὶ αὐτὸς κενῶν. Seguer ibid ἀκούων. Caeteri et editi ἐκείνοι τε λαλοῦσι, καὶ αὐτὸς κενῶν ἀκούει. Κενῶν = empty words.
- (207) ἔχοντων αὐτοθεν καὶ ἀπ' αὐτῆς τῆς προφορᾶς τὴν βλασφημίαν.
- (208) ποῖ (ἂν ποῖον - in what state - see Migne) ἕως δῆσεται;
- (209) τὸ τέλος... τῆς ἐπιδόσεως
- (210) Ἐν ποῖ ὁ πατήρ, εἰ γένηται καταστάσει, δυνήσεται τις τὸν πατέρα ἐν αὐτῷ βλέπειν;
- (211) διὰ τὸ δεῖν πρεπεῖν τὸν υἱόν, καὶ ἀλλοιουμένης αὐτὸν εἶναι φύσεως
- (212) καὶ ὡσαύτως ἔχει καὶ ὁ αὐτός ἐστιν.



unalterableness<sup>(213)</sup>? How can He be really in the Father, if He can choose in either direction?<sup>(214)</sup> Nay, perhaps, as He is alterable and strives day by day, perhaps He is not perfect yet. . . ." There is much about this section that will have to be studied later, but the important point now is the meaning of the word *πρεπτός*, as is revealed by the way in which the argument is handled by Athanasius. This word has been either left untranslated, or translated by "alterable", etc., following the L.N.P-N.F.; the same applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the corresponding privative forms. Newman, in his notes on ch. 35, points out that *πρεπτός* means, "not 'changeable', but of an ethical nature capable of 'improvement.'" and that "changeable" would be *ἀλλοιωτός*. The alternatives, "changeable" in the sense of change by pure chance, and "changeable" in the sense of being caused to change, cannot be admitted here as possibilities. Not even the Arians would entertain the former for such a being as their Logos-Son, and the latter is specifically what they go out of their way to exclude. Thus, in the Arian understanding of the formula in question, Newman's interpretation is certainly correct.

There are two elements in the meaning of *πρεπτός*, the ethical character, complete with the possibility of choosing evil, and the progressive character. It is noteworthy that here Athanasius does not devote a great deal of attention to refuting the purely ethical aspect of this Arian doctrine, and that he gives almost all his attention to the progressive element, that is, where it is perfectly clear which

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(213) τὸ ὅμοιον τῆς ἀπρεψίας.

(214) ἀμφίβολον ἔχων τὴν προαίρεσιν.

(215) He gives more attention to ethics in C. Ar. 51-52, also with reference to the idea of the Logos being *πρεπτός*, but this is not the definitive treatment.



element is in question.<sup>(215)</sup> This is, in fact pretty well confirmed in ch. 36, where Athanasius gives the true doctrine in contrast with the heresy. This shows that when the Arians described the Logos as *ὑποκείμενος*, it was progress that was in their mind, and is yet another confirmation of our thesis about the inner basis of Arianism. We must observe again, even though we are repeating it ad nauseam, the surprise so eloquently expressed by Athanasius that such doctrines are even thinkable. The fact that progressivism was the point at issue is finally confirmed by the whole tone of the chapter. When we read it again, in the twentieth century, it has an ominously familiar ring. What Athanasius is talking about is nothing else but the great endemic heresy of our age, which finally reached a screaming climax in the "German Christian" movement of 1933, the heresy that is otherwise virtually peculiar to the last two centuries. It is the idea that there is a progressive revelation of God, in the sense that the Agent and Instrument of revelation itself develops even to the point of contradicting its earlier stages, so that we can expect further more perfect manifestations of God and are released in principle from the obligation to take the earlier manifestations - concretely, the Incarnate Christ - with absolute seriousness. It is another sign of the supreme greatness of Athanasius that he foresaw, in so many words, the time when people would say that Adolf Hitler, or the spirit of modern man and modern science, or the Dialectic of History, would be held to be greater than Christ. This is not to say that Athanasius actually attributed these views to Arius or to any Arian, but what he is saying, with a truly appalling clarity and exactitude, is that this sort of position is implicit in Arian theology, and only just below the surface at that.

The fact that the Arians brought up the ethical and "personalist" aspect of the Logos as *ὑποκείμενον*, although they did not make nearly so much of it as has been often maintained, is at first sight an argument against our theory and in favour of the theory that the Arians were pure Humanitarian Christologists, until it is remembered that this exactly corresponds to the most notorious dilemma and paradox of Marxism itself, and also of all the other successors of Hegel. It is implicit even in the ontogeny of Marxism; the path from the Absolute Idealism of Hegel to the monistic dialectical materialism of Marx was, as a matter of plain fact, through the pure humanism of Feuerbach. Arius would have revelled in the post-Hegelian dispute between Lotze and his followers, who maintained that the Absolute was personal and on that basis elaborated a philosophy of ethical idealism, and his opponents, who contended that the Absolute cannot be personal in that sense, and was therefore not in the sphere of ethics.<sup>(216)</sup> He perfectly understood the question at issue and in fact raised it himself. He would have enjoyed even more the question that is always coming up in Marxism of what merit can be attached to the actions of revolutionary heroes if the fulfilment is certain anyway, and whether there is in fact any stimulus to ethical action under these circumstances. Communists have always shown the keenest and most pungent interest in the question of revolutionary ethics in the individual, and in that sense in the ethics of monistic historical necessity, however paradoxical this whole subject must be for them. Probably the answer would be that the ultimate ethical subject must be the proletarian Marxist revolutionary movement as such, and in that sense the force of historical necessity itself, and that goodness in the individual

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(216) For a review of the question and references see Barth, Ch. Dog. (E.T.) Vol. II: Pt. I pp. 291 ff.



consists in microcosmic conformity with this macrocosm - a good Hegelian answer, incidentally. This subject is too involved to be followed out here, but it is not too much to say that the Arian idea of the Logos-Son, as such and in all His relative cosmological ultimacy, coming into His own glory as a reward for virtue or on the ground of His certain and foreknown constancy in behaviour, resembles nothing that has ever been conceived before or since quite as much as the Marxist idea of the proletariat being worthy of its glory because it would surely remain obedient to its revolutionary task, or the Hegelian idea in general of the Absolute being the Absolute and deserving the glory of the Absolute because it would come to perfect self-consciousness. Both these ideas are nonsensical and paradoxical enough anyway, on any other basis, but it is not too much to suggest that each can throw light on the other, and indeed that the Arian doctrine, with which they were incidentally very free, is in some ways once again a clearer statement of the Marxist position than Marx himself.

*with the sole exception of their reductionism,*

It only remains to point out that there is perhaps no respect in which Arianism is so startlingly modern as in its treatment of ethics; even its preoccupation with progress is not quite so novel. The point that we are about to make comes out best when we consider simply the various correlations of ethics for Arianism rather than make a microscopic study of their teachings; perhaps a "free association" test, if such a thing were possible, would indicate it even more clearly. It is fair to say that, in general, most systems of morality, up till about 150 years ago, tended to correlate morality with something unchangeable, that is, a fixed moral or ethical code; a person was moral

in proportion as he conformed to this code, and any changeability in him was a deficiency in ethics and morality, however much, in practice, he might be liable to change. However we find in Arianism that the very thing that constitutes the ethical and moral character of the Second Person is his liability to change, at least! The correlates of ethics and morality do not reside in the ~~actual potential or~~ <sup>fixed constant standard</sup> ~~to which the Son conforms; they reside in the actual potential or~~ empirical change and changeability of the moral being himself. And the case is even more interesting than this, if our view is correct about the overriding importance of the notion of "progressiveness" in the meaning of the word *πρῶτος*, which also indicates the ethical nature of the Son. In this case, the ethical nature of the Son would actually be constituted by His advance, His progress, His change, in other words. This is in accord with much modern thought and sentiment, but the only system which has ever succeeded in saying anything like this with the clarity of Arianism is Marxism, once again, where all traces of the rigid standard are regarded as bourgeois reaction and thus anathematized; this is precisely one of its most celebrated or notorious features, and the one that caused perhaps the greatest scandal to its Christian critics a century ago.

There is a third passage, from C. Ar. II: 29: 209A - 31: 212B, in which the same general principle applies in a very unlikely context; that of the Arian idea of the necessity for a cosmic Mediator of creation on the ground that creation could not stand God Himself: "If God, willing to create originate nature, and deliberating concerning it, conceives (*ἐπινοεῖ*) and creates the Son, according to you, so that through Him He may frame us, consider how great an impiety (*ἀσεβείαν*) you have dared to utter.

30 First, it appears that the Son has come to be for us (*δι' ἡμᾶς*) rather than we *δι' αὐτόν*. . . . (on the basis of I Cor. 11: 7-9) we would



be made God's Image, and for<sup>(217)</sup> His glory, but the Son would be our image and exist for our glory. And we would have come to be so as to exist, but- according to you - God's Logos was made as an instrument (*ὄργανον*), not that it might be,<sup>(218)</sup> but for our need, so that He is constituted from our need,<sup>(219)</sup> not we from Him. Are not men who even conceive such thoughts worse than mad? For if the Logos had come to be for our sake, He would not have precedence over us with God,<sup>(220)</sup> for He would not have had Him within Him and taken counsel concerning us, but would have had us in Himself and, according to them, taken counsel concerning His own Logos. But if this is so, then perhaps the Father did not really will the Son at all;<sup>(221)</sup> for it would have been not in willing Him that He created Him, but, willing us, He would have formed Him for our sake, for He would have conceived Him after us; so that, according to these irreligious men, in the long run the Son, Who came to be as an instrument, would be superfluous, now that they have come to be on behalf of whom He also was created. But if the Son alone was made by God alone because He could endure it, but we, because we could not, were made by (*παρά* + gen.), the Logos, why does He not first take counsel about Him . . . but rather about us? . . . Or, since He counsels about us first, why does He not make us first, since His will is sufficient for the constitution (*συστάσιν*) of all things? But He would create Him first, yet counsel first about us; and He would will us before the Mediator; and while He calls us creatures when He wills to create us and counsels about us, He would call Son and Proper Heir Him Whom He frames for our sake! But it would be we, for whose sake He made Him, who ought rather

(217) εἰς

(218) Athanasius lays great stress (see C. Ar. II: 51 ff.) on the fact that even creatures are created by God simply to be what they are before any sort of relation arises; for a being to be held to be essentially constituted by relations would, for Athanasius, be an insult. See below, pp. 879-83.

(219) αὐτὸν ἐκ τῆς ἡμῶν χρείας συνίστασθαι.

(220) οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲ πρῶτος ἡμῶν παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ.

(221) τάχα οὐδὲ δόλως ἠθέλε τὸν Υἱὸν τὸν Πατέρα.

be called sons; the alternative is<sup>(222)</sup> that He, Who is His Son, is rather the object of His previous thoughts and His will, for Whom He makes all us . . . .

31 (But) . . . the Logos was not made on our behalf, but rather we on His behalf, and all things were created in Him. For not on account of our weakness was He strong and made by the Father alone, that He might frame us through Him as through an instrument . . . . For even if it had seemed good to God not to make the things originate, still the Logos would have been not less with God and the Father in Him. At the same time things originate could not have come to be without the Logos; hence they have come to be through Him, and fittingly."

This passage shows what would be the final absurd result of combining the basic Arian doctrine that the Logos was a creature with acceptance of the Father in any shape or form, and trying to justify this system, and give the Father a place, in terms of the stale old doctrine that a cosmic intermediary is necessary for creation itself; the Logos would take second place to the other creatures, particularly man, since He would be created in order that the others should come to be! It might appear at first sight that the argument depends on an idealistic over-estimate of the significance of creatures existing, even before creation, as ideas in the mind of God. But it is clear on closer examination that this is not so. Athanasius maintains most strongly that the Will of God, simply, and as such, is sufficient for the creation of all things, in the material sense, since God creates *ex nihilo*; this does not mean that God cannot postpone the creation of what He has planned, but that there can be no material force of resistance which delays the execution of God's will. Thus, the other creatures would, in a real sense, have temporal priority over the Logos, not only *ratione cogitandi* (by God) but *ratione essendi*. The

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(222) ἡ δὲ λογία + acc. and infinitive.



consequences of this are expressed so lucidly by Athanasius that any paraphrase would be merely turbid. But the main point is that among the consequences would be a priority of constitution of the remaining creatures over the Logos. This idea of a Logos, or a god, constituted of human need, is exactly the view that Feuerbach found as the true essence of all religion, and which he took as his starting point for his reduction of it to the field of purely human interests and demands. What Athanasius is saying is that the Arians will be unable to avoid this as their Logos-doctrine even on their own present express premises. Once again, one is astonished at the modernity of the Arians, or the prophetic prescience of Athanasius, or both, since, with the possible exception of some sceptical Greek circles, Athanasius is raising an issue which, to the author's knowledge, was never raised before in this form, and never since until Feuerbach. Of course, by reason of the genuinely, if perversely, Logocentric character of Arian theology, the position was much more serious than appears at first sight, and any attempt to keep the traditional Trinitarian doctrine would lead immediately to the full Feuerbachian position of atheism.

As a matter of plain fact, these consequences would apply to any position of the type that we have called pragmatist, that is, the idea that the criterion of the correctness of a theology is that it ensures our salvation - including most emphatically the pragmatist misinterpretation of Athanasius. The only way out is to insist, once again, as Athanasius does at the end of the extract quoted, that the Logos-Son existed, and had His full character and relation to the Father, eternally before the creation of the world, and quite regardless of the creation of the world. This is yet another instance of Athanasius's work, which we have seen in De Decr. 28-31 and C. Ar. I: 30-34, in breaking the old correlation between the Logos and the world



and establishing that the sole correlates of the Logos are to be found within the Trinity Itself.

Another interesting passage, which is not however directly concerned with Marxism, we shall insert parenthetically, because it shows once again the almost incredible far-sightedness of Athanasius, in that he could see in Arianism errors that are otherwise the exclusive preserve of modern theology. We quote from the beginning of C. Ar. II: 38, the context being the Arian doctrine that the Second Person is Wisdom through participation in an impersonal wisdom as resident as a quality in God:

"Now are they not worthy of all hatred for merely uttering this? Εἰ γὰρ ὡς αὐτοὶ νομίζουσιν, οὐ διὰ τὴν ἐκ Πατρὸς γέννησιν καὶ τὸ ἴδιον τῆς οὐσίας γίος ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὰ λογικὰ λόγος, καὶ διὰ τὰ σοφίᾳ δομένον σοφία, καὶ διὰ τὰ δυνάμει δυνάμις λέγεται. Πάντες τοι καὶ διὰ τοὺς διοποιοιμένους γίος ἐκλήθη. καὶ τάχα διὰ τὰ ὄντα ἔχει καὶ τὸ εἶναι, κατ' ἐπίνοιαν. (This elliptical sentence is best paraphrased thus: As they hold, He is not Son because of His generation from the Father and because He is proper to His essence; on the other hand, they hold that He is called Logos on account of logical things, Wisdom on account of things endowed with wisdom, and Power on account of things endowed with power. On this basis He must be called Son on account of those who are adopted to sonship; perhaps He would even have Being on account of the things that are, being, that is, according to notion). And then after all what is He? For He is none of them Himself, if they are merely His names, and He has but a semblance (φαντασίαν) of being, being decorated with these names on account of us (δι' ἡμᾶς). Rather is this some recklessness from the Devil, or worse, if they are not unwilling that they should truly (ἀληθῶς) subsist themselves, but think that the Logos of God ὀνόματι μόνον εἶναι. It is obvious what is being criticised here. It is the principle of universalisation and hypostasises of such qualities as wisdom and love, which frequently passed for theology in the nineteenth century; such universalisations and hypostasises were considered to be God. It is well known how thoroughly and effectively Feuerbach and his successors, particularly



Marx, demolished this theology (?) by showing that this procedure can never transcend the created order. Perhaps the Arians were following some such sophisticated line. But it is more likely, from their ruthlessly blunt language, that they were in effect criticising this sort of idealism after the fashion of Feuerbach, in this as in so many other respects. Starting from the ancient traditional tendency of Alexandrian theology, from Philo onwards, to treat Wisdom in this way, Arius and Asterius were simply pointing out with alacrity that this principle (which was, in ancient times, applied to the Second Person but not to the First as yet) did nothing whatever to cross the chasm between Divine and creaturely being, and therefore that "Wisdom", conceived in this way, could be no more than just one of the wise beings (univocal predication, of course). On second thoughts, the writer would be prepared to maintain that this explanation is the more likely one for this element in Arianism than a theory of the simple influence of Paul of Samosata.

It only remains to notice once again that the great exegetical and hermeneutic principle of Arianism, that statements of a creaturely character about the Logos have an absolute priority over statements attributing Deity to the Logos, so that the latter must be interpreted or explained away in terms of the former, is yet another respect in which the Arians strikingly anticipated modern thought, albeit in a sphere not completely general. In the ruthlessly clear and systematic way in which it was presented by the Arians, it was quite unique until it was revived by Feuerbach in the 1830's, and from him it has become the stock in trade of Marx, Freud, and in fact all modern atheists who seriously discuss theology; and also, most unfortunately, in a slightly different way, of Bultmann. We have already discussed this in full.

But it must also be said, in this context, that it is a grave error to assume, from a common misinterpretation of Marx's Last Thesis on Feuerbach, that Marx had no interest in hermeneutics, exegesis, and revelation, or in what he might call the theoretical interpretation of religion and Christianity. The very fact that he believed, and said, that philosophers have hitherto interpreted the world, but that the point is to change it, meant that he had to have some means of interpreting what, in the ordinary course of events, would be considered as religious statements or as revelations of the Deity; this would be an essential first stage in any programme, and is the stock in trade of all Marxist propaganda and agitation. Marx had as complete an intellectual and theoretical (in its way) apparatus for the denial of revelation as the Church has ever had, on the purely human level, for accepting it. All such statements and claims are not only rejected as impossible as regards their prima facie meaning, but explained away in great detail, and frequently to the accompaniment of great effort and detailed research, as mendacious manifestations whose empirical equivalent is some completely human and, of course, sinful interest, a disguised form of class oppression in the case of Marxists. In this regard, they are followed, *mutatis mutandis*, by Freud and the more intellectually formidable modern atheists generally. One may dilate too far on this matter, but the point is that this is completely different from saying, as the average logical positivist or atheistic linguist philosopher does, that theological statements are literally meaningless. To a Marxist or Freudian, theological statements have an all too definite meaning; they mean that something is wrong with the speaker, and something definite that can be read off in detail by



analysis of the statements concerned (and other material). The author cannot resist an obiter dictum that Christian thinkers should not find it any matter for complacent rejoicing when linguist philosophers begin to show an interest in theological or revelatory statements; theology may be jumping out of the frying pan into the fire.

Thus, the contrast is between the Christian doctrine of revelation, and the correspondingly well-developed Marxist doctrine of what can only be termed anti-revelation. The place of this in Arianism is occupied by the rather more restricted hermeneutic principle of reduction, and there is little on revelation proper except the airy and off-hand statement in the "Thalia" that we know the Ingenerate (or un-originate) through Him Who was generate (or originate) by nature. It is again perhaps as well for the Arians that they never discussed in any detail how such a revelation would be possible, since they would certainly have either pulled their own position apart or gone on to practical atheism by denying the possibility of revelation at all. It is in the Athanasian answer to Arianism that we find the problem of revelation coming up as one of the major topics of theology; in fact, it had been fully treated in the "De Incarnatione" itself.<sup>(223)</sup> His solution, that the deeds of Christ are revealed through the flesh but are revealed as the deeds of God, may have its difficulties, but this is one of the most difficult questions of theology, and the obscurities in Athanasius, who at least deserves the great credit for tackling the problem clearly, more so than almost any other theologian, cannot be compared with the arrant, even if necessary, vacuity of Arius. The reason, in a sense, why Feuerbach and his successors were able to

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(223) Chs. 14-18; see also above, pp. 134-52.

elaborate such a ruthlessly clear doctrine of anti-revelation was that they had taken precisely that final step that was beyond Arius - open, admitted atheism, a final removal of the encumbrance of the otiose Father (?).

It might be objected that our hypothesis as to the relation between Arianism and Marxism does not do justice to the part played by humanity, and especially the humanity of Christ, in Arianism. We have already attacked this contention from one side in advance, in showing that the Arians were quite different from Humanitarian Christologists, however much they may have used, not to say exploited, the Humanity of Christ in their apologetic. On the other hand, it must now be pointed out that Marxism has a far greater connection with Humanity, and even the Humanity of Christ, than is obvious from the way in which its devotees talk of dialectical materialism, etc. This can be seen even in Engels and Lenin in spite of their occasional excursions into general physical and physico-philosophical theory, and is quite obvious in Marx. The values in which Marxists are interested are primarily human values, and in a sense they are even justified in looking down on the modern capitalistic affluent society as bourgeois materialism, a sneer which it returns in the opposite sense with equal correctness, from its own point of view. Even the economics (or science) as valued supremely in Marxism is really a human activity. And the road from Hegel to Marx lay through the frank humanism of Feuerbach, with his reinterpretation of Christianity in terms of humanism. And the humanism which Feuerbach used for this purpose was actually the humanity of Christ Himself. Finally, the initial stage of this process, in Hegel's doctrine of the absolute identity of human and divine natures, was actually associated closely with a Christological error as



well as an associated Trinitarian error, since he took the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation to be mythologically particular representations of the general truth that he was uttering. The author was amazed, even after the hypothesis of the fundamental relation between Arianism and Marxism had occurred to him, to read once again Feuerbach's "Essence of Christianity". This book, and Athanasius Contra Arianos III: 26-58, on the Arian handling of the Incarnational and Synoptic material, fitted like a glove! The material in the latter could have been used, exactly, as a reply to the magnum opus of Feuerbach, with the sole exception that the later writer dealt with the Cross and Resurrection in a way that the earlier Arians could not, for reasons that we have already stated.<sup>(224)</sup> The only general difference between the Arians and Feuerbach was that the former were treating of Christ in Himself, and Feuerbach of Christ as He is significant of humanity and general truth as a whole. This is the final confirmation, in apparently a most unlikely place, of the basic resemblance between the two positions.

Along with these resemblances, one must bear in mind three most important and significant differences. The first, that Arianism still admitted an extremely rationalistic monotheism while Feuerbach and all his successors, including supremely Marx, were openly atheistic, we have already discussed in full, since it has been the great factor that has blinded scholarship so far to the truth of the matter. It only remains to query just what is the possibility of this rationalistic monotheism anyway.<sup>(225)</sup> It may be true - as we have begun to understand

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(224) See above, pp. 440. Feuerbach treats of the Cross and Resurrection in, e.g. Pt. I, ch. 5, "The Mystery of the Suffering God", and Pt. I, ch. 14, "The Mystery of the Resurrection and the Miraculous Conception."

(225) This subject is reviewed in Barth, Ch. Dogm. (E.T.) Vol. II, Pt. I, pp. 440-461, esp. 448-50 and 451-57.



in the last century - that the purely rational monotheism familiar in the philosophical tradition prior to Hegel must degenerate into atheism, in a manner corresponding to the intellectual difficulties of Monism.<sup>(226)</sup> There is only one Single God, and that is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! Thus, even this apparently decisive difference between the two doctrines loses a great deal of its significance.

Intimately related to this is the practical difference that, as one might say, Arianism and Marxism adopted the opposite and dialectically antithetical disguises corresponding to their retention and repudiation respectively of rational monotheism. We have already suggested that one reason for the first distinction was that the Arians would have had literally nowhere else to go; it was not for nothing that the outbreak of the heresy was contemporaneous with all the changes associated with the name of Constantine, including all of the official adoption of Christianity, the manifest failure or imminent failure of the whole of the ancient culture and thought, including the Roman Empire as a political and military entity, and the increasing centralisation of control (not inconsistent with early feudalistic tendencies in the country) over city life, the great habitat of the ancient liberal tradition. Thus, they had no alternative but to shelter under the wing of the Church and to disguise the essential atheism of their mode of thought by taking, however, emptily, the name

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(226) For example, the Second Part of Plato's "Parmenides" is actually a refutation, by Parmenides' own technique, of Parmenides' type of monism; in the solution to the problem, in the "Sophist", Plato presents Being, that is, the unitary factor in all things, as being relational rather than substantive, coming very near to presenting it as, in brief, the logical copula, and in extenso, the whole of logic and its laws and relations. The author remembers Professor McIntyre, now one of his supervisors, telling him when he was a professor in Sydney that A.E. Taylor, the famous authority on Plato, used to say that anyone who felt that there were intellectual difficulties in the Doctrine of the Trinity ought to read Plato's "Parmenides". Freud took the corresponding line on religion in "Moses and Monotheism". Of course, the most famous refutation of



of the Father; the simultaneous exacerbation of the Sabellian question was of great assistance to them. All these conditions, as we have said, were reversed with Feuerbach and Marx, and, besides, the Arian solution was impossible not only in terms of contemporary theology but even in terms of the Hegelian philosophy. Thus Feuerbach and Marx became frank atheists. The corresponding disguise has been for Marxists to stress their atheism and materialism all the more in order to disguise the truth that their philosophy is really parasitic on Christianity and therefore falls directly under the victorious judgment of Christ. This is why Marxists patently talk about one entity, or reality as a whole (at any rate human reality as one whole), and yet never indicate it by any term which indicates the full concreteness of their conception. They never get beyond such terms as historical necessity. Of course, the ideal term for the concept with which they operate is "Logos" in its Greek sense, appropriately modified by all the factors that have emerged since, in the way of a new emphasis on dynamic and historical development. Once the Marxists had made this clear, even to themselves, they would immediately lay themselves open to the sort of refutation that Athanasius made of Arianism in C. Ar. II: 18-30. It would also become clear that all their talk about dialectical materialism and scientific socialism is so much obfuscation, and that what they are really worshipping is a creaturely god that exactly corresponds to the Arian Second Person. This criticism does not apply, unfortunately, to much of modern atheism, but it does apply completely to classical Marxism, and it will apply as long as it keeps its unitary character and monism which is the source of all its real fascination.

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this kind, which was meant to apply to idealism (but not to monism) and the religion alike, is the whole philosophy of Feuerbach and his successors.

It was Athanasius who tore the mask from the Arians' disguising, to reveal their ultimately atheistic implications; what an opportunity the Church has missed so far of stripping the disguise of materialism that shelters the Marxists from the judgment of Christ!

The third important difference between Arianism and Marxism is in the field of generality. Arianism is talking of the Second Person as a discrete entity, even where their cosmological interest was uppermost, Who became manifest as a reality personally distinct from other creatures. On the other hand, Marxism, and also Hegel and Feuerbach, are talking about the general laws of creaturely life or humanity as a whole, or humanity or reality as a constitutive whole, the general as opposed to the individual. This difference is so important that it requires most careful evaluation, but we shall postpone it to the very end of this chapter, for a reason that will be obvious at that point.

Having established the general character of the Arian para-theology, we must see if there is any evidence of how the Arians came to believe their basic tenet. Unfortunately, a distinction must be made, for one thing, between the extremists of Arianism, like Arius himself, and the fellow-travellers who were trapped into supporting the heresy for other, and perhaps irrelevant, reasons. An even more serious difficulty is that there are no scientific scholars among our sources of Arianism, who could tell us exactly the stages by which it grew; in a certain sense our first knowledge of it is when it is in full flower. We are lucky that Athanasius enables us as much as he does to see Arianism, so to speak, in depth and in the round. However, we are not altogether devoid of hints. The main one we have already noticed<sup>1</sup> in our commentary on the Contra Gentes of Athanasius (as a matter of fact, it was this that first suggested to the author the hypothesis that he is now advancing.) We have seen how Athanasius, in the later chapters of



the work, almost uses the psychological analogy for the relation between the Logos and the corporeal world. In fact, he does actually use it, although in a subordinate way, and without admitting it into the structure of his theology, and there is no doubt that Athanasius's reserve on this matter is associated with the fact that he has been compelled to take seriously the creaturely nature of man even where he is (as the Greeks saw it) at his most exalted - in the sphere of human rationality. Now, he is at the time quoting liberally from Platonic literature in which, as we have already made clear, this analogy is most important. The psychological analogy has a long and honoured history, which nowhere shows itself more clearly than in the measure of respect paid to it even by Karl Barth.<sup>(227)</sup> Athanasius's use of it in the *Contra Gentes*<sup>(228)</sup> is the measure of its great popularity in the Alexandria of his youth - as we have already seen, the *"Contra Gentes"* is an even better source of Athanasius's theological milieu than of Athanasian theology itself. It was in the same milieu that Arius grew to maturity. It is as certain as anything can be that for every Athanasius who showed the right degree of reserve in this matter, there were thousands who used the psychological analogy without the caution of their great contemporary.

Now, what would happen when someone with this type of theology was squarely confronted with the fact that man is utterly a creature, even as regards his soul? The Antiochene theology would have brought Arius face to face with this during his early studies there, and it is in this sense, and this alone, that Arianism can be held to be Antiochene. On the other hand, Arius would, on this hypothesis, kept all the other elements that he had learnt from Alexandria and which belonged there. (If Lucian was in fact a genuine Arian, it would have

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(227) See Ch. Dogm. (E.T.) Vol. III Pt. II, p. 343 f and 367 f.

(228) Ch. 43, and see above, pp. 66-7 and 82-5.

been because of the same confrontation of theologies affecting him as a member of the previous generation; this in any case would not affect our conclusion that the Antiochene theology was innocent of being the direct ancestor of Arianism.) The result would be, if he still took the psychological analogy seriously - Arianism, pure and simple, in the complete form which we have described. The argument would go something like this:

The body and soul of man are both creatures, utterly and unreservedly.

Therefore: The relation between body and soul is not a relation that involves crossing of the boundary between Creator and creature.

But: The relation between the corporeal world, whether as an arithmetical or as an integral sum, and the Logos is the same as that between body and soul. (The Psychological Analogy.)

Therefore: The relation between the world and the Logos does not involve crossing the boundary between Creator and creature.

But: The world, whether as an arithmetic or as an integral sum, is completely within the created order, no less than any individual corporeal thing.

Therefore: The Logos is also completely within the created order, and thus is utterly and unreservedly a creature.

Q.E.D.

If any sceptic maintains in the face of this speculative reconstruction that it depends on an abuse of analogy that no Christian can condone, the author is the first to admit this point. But if anything this confirms the case. One of the most persistent things against which Athanasius always had to struggle was the misuse of analogies. This is shown on almost every page of the anti-Arian writings. It was the thing that Arian propaganda systematically and



thoroughly exploited.<sup>(229)</sup> The tendency made it all too easy for the conservatives like Eusebius of Caesarea to be deluded by the Arians, and all too difficult for them to resist their plausible arguments. It was one of the major, if too little remembered, tasks of Athanasius to define accurately the conditions for the proper use of analogies in theology. This he did, for the first time in theological history, and, as we shall show, did it thoroughly and well, even though he did not employ the later technical and logical terms. In fact, what is usually attributed to Thomas Aquinas is to be found, in perfect form, in Athanasius.

In view of the state of the theology with which Athanasius had to cope, it is in the highest degree probable that the psychological analogy was abused in the way that we have suggested, with the only possible result. This step is identical with that taken by Feuerbach in the precisely corresponding circumstances of nineteenth century Idealism, when he likewise pointed out that the Hegelian natural theology, in its ascent from the lowest to the Absolute, never really reached God at all, but really remained all the time within the created order; therefore, the Hegelian Absolute cannot be anything higher than the highest essence of man.

We can approach the same problem in a more general way, from the point of view of natural theology as a whole, including the objective form. It is a commonplace, and in any case true, that Hegel represents the culmination, not to say apotheosis, of all natural theology, and that therefore the negation in Feuerbach and, following him, in Marx, of this whole doctrine of God, represents its final nemesis. Is the same true of Arianism, that it is the final contradiction of some

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(229) Cf. outstandingly. C. Ar. I: 22.



corresponding system of natural theology? There is unfortunately insufficient firm evidence to make a definite statement. But we do know that there was a highly developed tradition of natural theology in a fairly pure form, especially in Alexandria, and that it was probably a development of the last half century before the outbreak of the Arian controversy.<sup>(230)</sup> Thus, it is by no means unlikely that Arianism is a militant reaction to this tradition comparable with that of Feuerbach, and that this natural theology, which we know was there, had at least as much to do with the origin of Arianism as the straight Antiochene or Origenist theologies which are so often invoked in this connection.

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(230) This tradition had affinities with the Stoics. In view of this there is one tantalising passage that we can cite in Athanasius from C. Ar. II: 11: 169 B-C; " . . . let them find out whether it is written anywhere, 'God made Himself a Son,' or 'He created for Himself a Logos,' or . . . 'The Logos is *ποίημα* or *κτίσμα*,' . . . But if they can produce nothing of the kind, and only catch at such stray expressions as 'He made' and 'He has been made. . . ' I fear that, from hearing . . . (Gen. 1:1 etc.) they should come in time to call the Logos the heaven, and the Light that came to be on the first day, and the earth, and each thing that was made, so as to end in resembling the Stoics, as they are called; the one extends God Himself into all things, the other co-ordinate (*συμβαλλόμενον*) the Logos of God with (*ἐς*) each thing that was made; if they have not almost said something of this sort already, in saying that He is one of His works." In view of our previous speculations, it is of great interest that this brief passage is an almost exact summary of the conflict between what is called Right-wing and Left-wing Hegelianism, the latter corresponding to the latter interpretation which is presented as the antithesis to Stoicism, and which was the line actually followed by the Arians; as is well known, Left-wing Hegelianism culminated in Feuerbach and Marx. It is true that this interesting corroboration of our theory is only presented hypothetically, but this is the nearest that Athanasius gets to an analysis in depth of Arian motives. Unfortunately, all the material for an analysis of this is deeply saturated with the Arians' own propaganda, and it is not sufficiently understood that, in a sense, the Arians were aghast at their own step and were thus concerned to disguise it as much as possible.



Although it is our opinion that the Arian controversy should not be confused with the later type of Christological issue, it is very probable that the sort of confusion that we have suggested above was repeated in the sphere of Christology. It must be remembered that, until the Arians and Athanasius, theology had not distinguished sharply enough between the humanity and the deity of Christ, or at any rate not with the clarity of the later Christology. Even Origen, who attempted to do so, tended to obscure this distinction by his doctrine of "rational natures". It will be shown that all the fourth and fifth century orthodox and heretical Christologies, which are all orthodox as regards the Deity of the hypostatic Christ, rest on the work of Athanasius in his answer to the Arians. But it is certain that, even at this early date, there was a Christological controversy in Antioch between the later Origenists and the Samosatenes, with the former emphasising His subordinate deity and the latter His hypostatic humanity. Unfortunately, it was not yet clearly understood that full weight must be given to each, without any fusion of them. This also corresponds exactly to a certain feature in Hegelianism. The absolute identification of human and divine natures first manifesting itself self-consciously in Christ and Christianity, is essentially a Christological heresy as much as anything else, and is ultimately due to the neglect of the Chalcedonian "inconfuse"; it also confuses Christology and cosmology.

These possible roots of Arianism are all special cases of the general principle that Arianism and Marxism are both militant reactions from a misguided idealism which had previously corrupted Christianity deeply. The author is convinced that this is the real common root, and it will be instructive to examine the question from another point of view more directly relates to dogmatics. We have already seen how this worked in Hegelianism, as the precursor of Feuerbach and Marx. Hegel

idealised the true Christian doctrine of God the Creator by his notion of reason going out into what it was not, thus reproducing itself in toto and identically as the summation of the world; creatio ex nihilo was replaced by emanation, procession, or generation, and the distinction between the intra-Trinitarian relations and God's creation of the world was fatally obscured. His inability to make anything of the Christological distinction between human and Divine nature, beyond denying that it existed at all, is simply the Christological analogue and inevitable accompaniment of this error. Once Marx had decided that this position represented truth standing on its head, and had "put it right", the result was Marxist atheism. When we examine closely the pre-Arian Patristic doctrine on these matters, we shall see exactly the same errors and ambiguities, as we shall examine in more detail in the Appendix. We have already noticed the comparative uncertainty, at the best, of the distinction between the humanity and Deity of Christ. We have also noticed that in pre-Athanasian theology the title Logos for the Second Person really meant the Logos of the world, and the disastrous consequences that were inevitable on that view, as well as the work of Athanasius in attacking this mischievous correlation. We have to observe now, in addition, a tendency to consider that the creation of the world is correlated with, or even represented by, a change in the intra-Trinitarian state of the Logos, generally from *λόγος ἐνδιὰθετος* to *λόγος προφορικός*, that is, a generative processive, or emanative change. This was fairly general in, for instance, the Apologists.<sup>(231)</sup> It is not that any of them were Arians, in spite of the charge, frequently unjust, that they were dangerous

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(231) This point is very clearly brought out by Jules Lebreton, "Histoire du Dogme de la Trinité . . ." (French ed.), pp. 443-456. The Patristic excerpts that support this are: Theophilus, Ad Autol. II: 10 and (especially) II: 22. Tatian, Disc. 5; Justin, Apol. I: 21, Apol. II: 1: 2; 6: 2 (espec.); 6: 3; Dial, cum Tryph. 61: 1 (espec.); 100:4; 105:1. Athenagoras, Legatio 10. Hippolytus, C. Noet. 10-11 (espec.); Philosopheumena 10:33. Tertullian Adv. Praxean 5 and 8 (espec.).



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subordinationists. Tatian, and Tatian alone, is open to grave suspicion on this matter. But the contrary charge is perfectly correct; they were responsible for the idealistic confusions which, when opposed, produced Arianism. And a yet more serious charge can be brought against pre-Arian theology, an excessive fascination with the idea of the created world as a copy, or a series of copies, of ideas that pre-existed in God. To a certain extent, this idea does correspond to the truth. But on the other hand - and this is something that is normally not stated clearly enough, and was not clearly stated by, say, Athanasius in the *Contra Gentes* and *De Incarnatione* - it should never be allowed to mean that what is created *ex nihilo* is merely the amorphous  $\mathfrak{A}\eta$ , *materies*. What was worse, in the early fourth century, this notion co-existed with a revival of the Platonism of the Socratic dialogues, according to which the real thing about material entities was precisely the Forms or Ideas; the *materies* was essentially unreal. Thus, on that basis too, the important thing about creation would really be the emanation of what was previously within God. However much theology was then concerned to deny emanationism in its gnostic form, the combination of all these above elements would certainly have produced a confusion between creation and emanation as potent for evil as the formally and materially equivalent confusion in Hegel.

While the type of theology that we have described above was undoubtedly the most culpable, there were other tendencies of a less serious kind that were, nevertheless, by no means free from blame. The Origenist type of subordinationism has been often mentioned in this connection, but even more interesting is the type of Logos theology in

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(232) For a review, with references, of this idea and its great prevalence in ancient theology, see Barth, *Ch. Dogm.* (E.T.) Vol. III, Pt. II, pp. 153-154. *It may also be mentioned here, that the Gnostics and Manichees, who figure so prominently in Arian polemic, are really vulnerable idealists.*



which the meaning of Logos is held to be "Word", in the ordinary sense, that is, the sort of thing that is made, in the human field, of syllables. This is normally regarded as the "Biblical" or "Hebraic" concept of Logos or ~~λογος~~. Athanasius repeatedly discusses this concept, and rightly points out that the divisibility of the human word into letters, phonemes, syllables, etc., and their multiplicity and transience, is something that can inevitably have no analogy in the Divine Logos, in that it is caused by the divisible and transient nature of man. Unfortunately, the doubts that we are going to raise at this point apply independently of the caveat of Athanasius. The point is that it is possible, in a certain sense, to regard a man's "word" or "words", as expressing his own nature or even his own essence. For example, the words of, say, a poet<sup>or monarch</sup>, can be held to be a genuine and full expression of his essence as a ruler<sup>an artist or</sup>. It is also possible to argue, as Athanasius did, that any difficulties in applying this analogy to the Godhead disappear when we remember that God is not like man. But it is also unfortunately true that, from another point of view, this sort of "word" is the only analogy that we know in the human field to creatio ex nihilo. It is not for nothing that the word "creation" and its derivatives are bandied about so much in artistic discourse. We are always hearing about Shakespeare's plays as his "creations"; this is the standard description of the products of the great Parisian fashion designers, and presumably an autocratic king, by the word of his authority, can also be said to make or create a law, or by extension to make or create the word which is the substance and the authority of the law.<sup>(233)</sup> It is interesting to note that a Greek thinker would find it particularly easy to look at the matter in this second way, since they were completely objective on this issue; a word or discourse was always a word or some discourse about something;



that is, all the correlations and associations of a "word" in this sense would be with the object denoted or the creative activity initiated, or something else completely objective; there would be no correlations with the subject, the source of the "word". Thus, the Greeks would have faced the identical problem that arose with the cosmological Logos. The same result would, in the long run, be obtained with any theory which emphasised primarily the communicative aspect of the Logos; after all, there must be a transmitter and a receiver of all communications, and if one follows the very tempting line of saying that the Logos as Logos is God's communication with what is other than Himself, the corollary would have to be either pantheistic Hegelianism or Arianism. This is very far from saying that the Word concept, in any of the above senses, ought to be scrapped. But it is not too much to say that it requires at least as much careful examination and modification as the Son concept, and more, before it can be applied to the Godhead. Of itself, it is just as capable as anything else of landing theology

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(233) There is very strong evidence that this was a very real difficulty in Greek Patristics. After all, the Greeks were the most artistic people in history, but the word for "poem" was, of course, ποιήμα, literally, a thing made, the very word that was such a favourite with the Arians, and that for a poet was ποιητής, maker.

More to the point is the actual evidence of Dionysius of Alexandria, in his "Refutation and Defence", as cited in Athanasius, De Sententia Dionysii. 20: 509C: " 'For after I said that the Father is Maker (ποιητής as always here), I added, "Neither is He Father of the things of which He is Maker, if He that begat is to be understood strictly as Father." For the wider sense of the term "Father" we shall work out in what follows. Neither is the Father a maker, if by maker is meant simply manual tradesman (χειροτέχνης). For among the Greeks, wise men are called makers (ποιηταί) of their own λόγοι. And the Apostle speaks of a doer (πρωτεύς) of the Law, for men are called "doers" of inward qualities, like virtue vice . . . ' ". And again, 21: 512A-B: " 'For as I do not hold that the Logos is ποιήμα, and call God not His Maker but His Father, even if I in passing called God Maker while treating of the Son, yet even here a defence can be made. For the Greek philosophers call themselves makers (ποιηταί) of their own discourses (λόγους), although they are their fathers; while Divine Scripture describes us as doers (πρωτεύς) even of the motions of our hearts . . . ' ". The underlining is my own.

- Author.



into the sort of idealistic confusion between creation and generation - emanation - progression that was the natural precursor of Arianism.

Arianism was a militant reaction against this type of theology. Emanation, etc., was utterly and ruthlessly rejected, even at the cost of throwing out the baby with the bath-water, as the saying goes. The only relation that was admitted at all was that of creation, with the *ex nihilo* and all the other logical and theological consequences. Thus, the only relation that the Second Person could have to the First was that of being His creature. Even His true filial generation came under the ban. In the sense that they went right against Divine and Scriptural revelation, the Arians were rationalistic, but it was a sort of paradoxical and inverted rationalism, just like Marxism. As such, the Arians confronted orthodoxy in the person of Athanasius with an entirely new and unprecedented problem, which had not arisen in any previous age, and did not have to be faced again for a millennium and a half.

We have done our best to give, so help us God, a rationale of the heresy of Arianism, which the author is satisfied resembles nothing else that has ever existed, except the fully developed anti-theology of Marx. On the other hand, when all is said and done, there remains a lot in both these doctrines which cannot be explained in terms of their own internal rationale. On this basis, there will always remain something deeply irrational and unnecessary in each case. In a profounder sense, both are manifestations of the sheer wrath of God, His judgment on the Church for its sins, for its lack of theological vision, and, even more important if not directly relevant to this sort of dissertation, lack of love. It is only this, in the last analysis, that can explain the fanaticism and the vigour of both Arianism and Marxism. The stressing and preservation of the absolute distinction

between God and creatures, together with the most profound aversion to the ascription of Divine honours to anything not the One God, Living and True, is a most vital Christian interest, however perversely it functioned in the case of Arianism. In view of the muddle in which theology still is regarding the way in which history is the act of God, or of men, it would be fair to say that even Marxism is another case of the perverse functioning of the same essential part of Christian faith. And, from the other side, the real progress and exaltation in Christ or what still nevertheless always remains creaturely, is just as vital a Christian interest, since it is the very salvation that has been given to us. The reference to Marxism, in this case, is obvious. But even with Arianism, it is highly probable that it was the implied soteriology that was never expressed in what has come down to us of the Arian theology; that is, the exaltation which came to the Logos which was a creature, may come to us also, by implication. The older theology had in these regards been weighed in the balance and found wanting, as had its 19th century successor,<sup>1</sup> and Arianism was the judgment.

How was Athanasius to deal with this totally unpredictable problem, this grave threat to the faith? Firstly, Athanasius had to accept in full the strict Arian distinction between created and uncreated reality. There was no possibility of refuting Arius by going back to Origen or Justin. To return to the confusions of this earlier period would be simply asking for Arianism all over again. If anything, Athanasius actually turned Arius against himself by pointing out that, on the basis of his Scripturally correct distinction between Creator and creature, no creature could be the Logos! But, for the rest, Athanasius was compelled to attack the assumptions and ways of



thought that the Arians and their predecessors had in common, which were in fact responsible for all the trouble. The dangerous correlation between the Logos and the cosmos had to go, even though creatio per Verbum had to stay; henceforth the Logos was unreservedly and absolutely, both explicitly and implicitly, the Logos of God. For this reason, as we shall see later, the Holy Spirit once again, for the first time for centuries, came into prominence in its work of mediation to man. Again, although this process was far from complete, the Logos theology itself began to be replaced by the Son theology, as the essential descriptive account of the relation between the First and Second Persons. Perhaps the most important change was that the primacy of the Scriptural witness to the Deity of Christ had to be maintained completely and rigorously, as against the witness to His creatureliness. Therefore, the latter had to be interpreted in terms of the former. In doing so, Athanasius, for almost the first time, elaborated a complete doctrine of the Humanity of Christ who was hypostatically God, in clear distinction from His Deity. By this act, he virtually closed an epoch in theology, and initiated an era in which the Christological problem, as we understand it, was the chief issue in theology. In the same way, the new emphasis on our participation in the Humanity of Christ as well as sharing His Divine grace reinforced the revival of interest in the Spirit. In examining the anti-Arian literature of Athanasius, we shall see how this was done.

#### The Heresy of the Tropici or Pneumatomachi in Relation to Arianism

As this is a Trinitarian thesis, we must now turn to the heresy of the Tropici or Pneumatomachi, who have been called the Arians

of the Spirit. For the above reasons, and others that will be evident later, we use Athanasius as our essential source, in this case the Letters to Serapion. Now, if there is one thing that is certain about this heresy, it is that it had some close and intimate relation to Arianism, and that Athanasius was pungently aware of this relation. On the other hand, it is not immediately clear what this relation was. It is plausible enough at first sight, but the question, on any average interpretation, becomes more obscure the more closely it is examined, until it appears that Athanasius's procedure in Ep. II ad Serap. is best explained as a case of monomania. Theories are devised which meet fatal objections when tested against the rest of the Epistles, which cannot be entirely explained away in terms of the rudimentary and confused state of Pneumatic doctrine at the time. It is as if there is some major element in the argument that was so obvious at the time that it did not need to be specially mentioned, but which is not at all obvious to us. The author submits that the theory of Arianism that he has propounded makes the best sense of this matter.

It is impossible at this stage to say much about the critical question of the relation between the opponents of Athanasius and the party which we know as the Macedonians, who were condemned twenty years later at Constantinople as "Pneumatomachi". The issue has been treated very fully by Shapland in the Introduction to his edition of the Letters.<sup>(234)</sup> His conclusion is that the Macedonians were almost

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(234) The treatment of this issue by Shapland in the Introduction to his translation of the Letters to Serapion, is so much the definitive treatment that it will almost monopolize attention. Other authorities, insofar as they treat the matter at all, are fairly routine. The received opinion appears to be that Athanasius is writing against the Macedonians, and Shapland's refutation of this theory appears to the author to be decisive. For the remainder of the chapter, Shapland's Translation with notes etc., of the Letters will be cited as "op. cit.".



certainly the direct descendants of the Semi-Arians, and, more remotely, of the old Origenist tradition as represented by, say, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Origen himself.<sup>(235)</sup> Their position was one of conservatism, confusion, and agnosticism rather than that of the enemies of Athanasius, who appeared to be in no doubt whatever that the Spirit was a *κτίσμα* (as distinct from the Origenist doctrine that the Spirit was a *γενήτων*). They had the same relation to the latter theology as the Semi-Arians and the older Eastern conservatives had to what Athanasius termed the "Ariomaniacs". One difficulty is that apart from these Letters there is no trace of Tropicism or Pneumatomachism until about 368 or 370, and they were certainly written before 362.<sup>(236)</sup> If we are not deterred by this difficulty, the most probable explanation, according to Shapland, is that the movement opposed by Athanasius was almost if not quite certainly a genuine Ariomania of the Spirit, so to speak; it took this form because the work of Athanasius against Arianism had so effectively reconstructed theology and destroyed the old conservative school that what later became the Macedonian line was impossible there.<sup>(237)</sup>

The following are the references to the Tropicist or Pneumatomachist heresy in the Epistles, together with comment where appropriate: I: PG XXVI: 529A - 532A: "For thou . . . (sc. Serapion) didst write that certain people had left the Arians on account of their blasphemy against the Son of God, but held opinions opposed to the Holy Spirit, saying that He was not only a creature, but actually one

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(235) See Origen, Comm. in John 2: 10, 75, 76, and Eusebius Eccl. Theol. 3: 6: 1-3. The former, on the basis of John 1:3, says that the Spirit is the supreme *γενήτων* that comes to be *ἐκ τοῦ λόγου*, while Eusebius regards the Spirit as not *θεός* but as coming from the presence of God as the supreme Ambassador from a Royal Court. For the whole treatment of Macedonianism, see op. cit. 18-34.

(236) Op. cit. p. 25.

(237) Op. cit. p. 32.



of the ministering spirits, and that He differed from the angels only in degree. But this is just a sham (προσποιητός) fight against the Arians; it is really a denial of faith and piety. For even as the Arians, in denying the Son, deny the Father too, so the others, in insulting the Spirit, also insult the Son. The two parties have divided between them the offensive against the Truth, so that with one opposing the Logos and the other the Spirit they both maintain the same blasphemy against the holy Triad." Again, at the beginning of ch. 2, after a brief interval, Athanasius continues on the same lines, "To the Arians indeed, this way of thinking is not strange. Once having denied the Logos of God, they naturally make the same insulting statements against His Spirit. . . . (But, as for the others) . . . they will not have the Son of God to be a creature - indeed, their views on this are quite sound! How then could they endure even to hear the Spirit of the Son called a creature? Because of the unity of the Logos with the Father<sup>(238)</sup>, they will not have the Son belong to things originate, but rightly regard Him as the Creator of things made."

Athanasius plunges at once into criticism of the position being examined. This criticism recalls C. Ar. **X**: 17, in that the essential core is that, if these heretics had a Triad at all, it would be a Trinity of unlike things, God in a Trinitarian association with what He is not. What is lacking, compared with C. Ar. **I**: 17 is the dynamic element. Of course, these letters are much more condensed than the Contra Arianos, but this does indicate that the dynamic, or proto-Hegelian element, was much less in evidence here. The chapter concludes with the statement that, by reason of the general perversion of the Trinitarian theology,

((533B) "while thinking falsely of the Holy Spirit, they do not even think truly of the Son. For, if they thought correctly of the Logos, they would think soundly of the Spirit also, Who proceeds from the Father<sup>(239)</sup> and, being proper to the Son (τὸ τοῦ υἱοῦ ἰδίον), is from Him

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(238) διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα τοῦ Λόγου ἐνότητά  
 (239) παρὰ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται.



(παρ' αὐτοῦ) given to the disciples and all who believe in Him. Nor, erring thus, do they so much as keep a sound faith in the Father. . .".

These passages indicate that Athanasius and Serapion were dealing with a group of heretics who were orthodox with respect to the Son, but about the Spirit they followed a line that was pointedly reminiscent of Arianism at its worst. It would be true to say that, with certain modifications, the Pneumatic heretics made the same division between the Father and Son, on the one hand, and the Spirit on the other, as the Arians made between the Father and Son.

After this introduction, Athanasius introduces a criticism of the Tropicist exegesis of their favourite passage, Amos 4:13, in these words: (3: 536A) " . . . . The Arians, having misunderstood the incarnate presence of the Logos and the things that were said in consequence of it, took from them an excuse (πρόφασιν) for their heresy . . . . But whence were you deceived? . . . . ' (Owing to Amos 4:13) we believed the Arians when they said that the Holy Spirit is a creature.' So you read the passage in Amos. . . . But you explain (Prov. 8:22LXX) in accordance with the truth, in that you do not call the Logos a creature. But the passage in the Prophet you do not interpret, but when you merely heard 'spirit' you judged that the Holy Spirit was being called a creature. . . . But the text . . . gives no indication of the Holy Spirit; it only speaks of spirit. Why then, although there is a very great difference in Scripture in the use of "spirit", and although the text can properly be interpreted in an orthodox (ὀρθῶς) sense, do you - either through contentiousness or through having been poisoned by the sting of the Arian serpent - suppose that it is the Holy Spirit that is being referred to in Amos? Only so as not to forget to regard Him as a creature." At first sight, this passage seems to support the conclusion that we have rejected above, that Arianism was primarily the result of taking Scripture too seriously, to wit, the references to the Incarnate Christ. But on closer examination, it need not, and does not, bear this interpretation. Athanasius still describes these Scripture passages as the Arians' "excuse". The point is in the comparison between the



exegetical methods of the Arians and those of the Tropicists, to the disadvantage of the latter; since Athanasius has already been on record as saying that the former are thoroughly bad, even as interpretations of their own favourite passages, how much less excusable are the Tropicists! Once the Arians had made up their mind that the Logos was a creature, there was enough material in Scripture to give them some appearance of plausibility, however bad their exegesis was on any objective standard; on the contrary, the Tropicist exegesis of Amos 4:13 LXX, which Athanasius now proceeds to criticise, is a footling trifle. After all, Arian exegesis, as we shall show, required a whole new principle of theology to refute it; in comparison, the exegesis under discussion, which involved a simple confusion between  $\tau\rho\epsilon\iota\sigma\mu\alpha$ , a common noun, and  $\tau\omicron\ \tau\rho\epsilon\iota\sigma\mu\alpha$ , a definite proper noun with the article, could be refuted by the first laws of language which were well known to everybody. This is apparently the meaning of this passage.

Some further passages should be quoted from this section.

Ch. 7: 548B: "The spirit of which the prophet is now speaking has not even the definite article to give you an excuse. But it is simply that you have dared to invent ( $\epsilon\mu\nu\omicron\epsilon\iota\nu$  - the technical verb for conceiving a heresy - see Shapland's note) tropes for yourselves, and to say that the spirit that is described as created is the same as the Holy Spirit." In spite of the apparent meaning of this sentence, Shapland rejects the suggestion of Loofs that the word Tropicists refers essentially to the tendency specifically attributed to the later Macedonians, to justify their position by inconstant exegesis, on the ground that Athanasius himself in some way had to do the same thing. In this case the word would probably have the same sort of meaning as the related word  $\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\omicron\sigma\iota\varsigma$  had, as one of the classical Arian descriptions of the Logos as a corollary of their primary contention that He was a creature. That is, the Tropicists were so called because they regarded the Spirit



as a creature. The writer thinks that this is the more likely explanation, even though, for one thing, he feels that Athanasius's exegetical method must be defended as the only right one, and, for another thing, the element of teleological direction or progress which Athanasius saw so prominently in the epithet when it was applied to the Logos is not prominent on the surface in the case of the Spirit. Probably the answer is that we cannot separate the constancy of the exegesis from the constancy of the Being Who is revealed by the exegesis, which comes to very much the same thing anyway.

Ch. 9: init.: 552B: " 'But,' say they, 'since the text makes mention of Christ, we must consistently take the spirit to which it refers to be none other than the Holy Spirit.' So you observed that the Holy Spirit is named together with Christ! But when did you find him distinguished in nature (διὰ φύσιν ... τῇ φύσει) and estranged from the Son, so that, while you say that Christ is not a creature, you say that the Holy Spirit is a creature? It is absurd to name together things which are by nature unlike. For what community (κοινωνία) or what likeness (ὁμοιότης) is there between creature and Creator? At this rate you will number and join together with the Son, as well as with the Spirit, the creatures that came to be through Him." Since the LXX says of God, κτίσαν πνεῦμα καὶ ἀπεγγέλλων εἰς ἀνθρώπους τὸν υἱόν σου, ὁ υἱὸς σου, the strictures of Athanasius are not altogether justified, but the Tropicist exegesis does indicate a carelessness which, to a certain extent, asks for the rebuke. Later on in the same chapter (553B): And if, because all things come to be through the Logos, you think correctly that the Son is not a creature, then is it not blasphemy for you to say that the Spirit is a creature, (κτίσμα), in Whom the Father through the Logos perfects and renews all things?" These two statements confirm that the Tropici deliberately and with great emphasis rejected Arianism in the usual sense, but used language about the Spirit that was indistinguishable from that of Arius concerning the Son. It is most important to note clearly that Athanasius and Serapion charge the Tropici with calling the Spirit a κτίσμα. This is a very different word

from a *Χειρτόν*, after Origen and Eusebius of Caesarea, etc. This term as we have seen before, did not contain the essence of Arianism, but was rather one of those conservative ambiguities on which the heresy admittedly thrived. If this had been the term used, Athanasius's reaction would have been quite different; the point would have been coolly and temperately explained along the lines of *De Decretis* 28-31 and *C. Ar.* I: 30-34.

In Ch. 10: 556B, Athanasius introduces the Tropicist exegesis of I Tim. 5:21: "But the Tropici, in truth tropici, having made compact with the Arians (*συνθέμενοι τοῖς Ἀρειανοῖς*), and portioned out with them the blasphemy against the Godhead, so that the one may call the Son a creature and the other the Spirit - the Tropici, as they themselves say, have dared to devise (*ἐφευρεῖν*) for themselves tropes and to pervert also the saying of the Apostle . . ." This confirms the conclusions that have been already drawn. The statement that the Tropici have come to an arrangement with the Arians is, of course, rhetorical hyperbole, as they rejected the latter's essential doctrine, but it does correspond to some essential affinity that has not escaped the notice of Athanasius.

Ch. 15, beginning: " . . . But they, persevering in their antagonism towards the truth, speak again . . . 'If he is not a *Κτ.* nor one of the angels, but proceeds (*ἐκπορεύεται*) from the Father, then He is also a son, and He and the Logos are brothers. And if he is a brother, how is the Logos Only-Begotten? How is it, then, that they are not equal, but that the one is named after the Father and the other after the Son? How, if He is from the Father (*ἐκ τῆς Πατρὸς*), is He not said to have been also begotten (*γεννητὸς ἐστίν*) or to be a son, but simply Holy Spirit? But if the Spirit is of the Son (*ἵνα γινώσκω* - simple genitive), then the Father is the Spirit's grandfather'." This is a repetition, with much greater emphasis, of the Origenist argument that



the Spirit is a <sup>γενήτο</sup>ν, but with the all-important substitution of the concept of <sup>κτίσις</sup>, as we have said above. Shapland's note does not appreciate fully the significance of this difference, even if we admit that the Origenist doctrine of the Spirit was much more dangerous than his subordinationism of the Son. Once again, we find a combination of a keen orthodoxy about the Son combined with what can only be described as an outright Arianism of the Spirit. There are two other things that need attention. In the first place, their language shows that they had not yet differentiated between what were later described as filial generation and procession, and that in all probability theology in general was not prepared enough to recognise this difference. In the second place, over and above this, they showed themselves determined to keep the number of relationships at the barest possible minimum, in a manner pointedly reminiscent of the Arians. The Arians would have only one relation, that of creation; thus, the "Son" had to be a creature. The orthodoxy of the Tropici on this question meant that they had to accept, in addition, the relation of filial generation or procession, however they might choose to regard it. But they were not going to accept any more if they could possibly help it. The Holy Spirit, then, had to be another son, or soundly and completely a creature.

Ch. 17, beginning: " . . . it is mania to call Him a creature. . . . For It is enough (<sup>ἄρκει</sup>) to know that the Spirit is not a creature nor is He to be numbered with things originate. For nothing foreign (<sup>ἑτερότριον</sup>) is mixed with the Triad; it is indivisible and like itself (<sup>ὅμοιον ἑαυτῇ</sup>) . . . . Thus far human knowledge goes. He who seeks and inquires into what lies beyond these things disobeys him who said, 'Be not wise in many things, lest thou be confounded.' . . . But if the disciples of Arius, because wisdom will not enter into their evil (<sup>κακότεχνον</sup>) hearts, are not able to believe intelligently in the indivisible and holy Triad, let them not on that account pervert the truth as well, neither let them say that what they cannot understand



cannot be true . . . . Because they cannot understand how the holy Triad is indivisible, the Arians make the Son one with creation<sup>(241)</sup> and the Tropici, for their part, number the Spirit with the creatures.<sup>(242)</sup> They really ought to keep quiet if they do not understand, and not co-ordinate the Son in one case and the Spirit in the other with the creatures. Or they should acknowledge what is written, and join the Son to the Father and not divide the Spirit from the Son . . . . (Here follows an extended warning about asking questions which will not be answered) . . ." As Shapland points out in his notes on this passage, and in Introd. p. 28, the fact that Athanasius can make even a rhetorical appeal to silence is proof that the Tropici, as distinct from the Macedonians, were positive and not uncertain or sceptical in their denial of the Deity of the Spirit.

Ch. 21, beginning: "But if the Spirit has the same *τάξις καὶ φύξις* in relation to the Son<sup>(243)</sup> as the Son has in relation to the Father, will not he who calls the Spirit a creature necessarily hold the same to be true also of the Son? For if the Spirit is a *τὸν υἱοῦ κτίσμα*, it would be only consistent for them to say that the Logos is a creature of the Father. By such delusions the Arians have fallen into Judaism according to Caiaphas. But if those who say such things about the Spirit protest that they do not hold the opinions of Arius, let them avoid his words and keep from impiety towards the Spirit. . . . As regards the sayings both of the Prophet and the Apostle, by perverting whose meaning they have deceived themselves, these considerations are enough to refute the insults which derive from the ignorance of the Tropici<sup>(244)</sup> . . . . (After further consideration of the Scriptural evidence) . . . . perhaps they may be put to shame when they learn how far the blasphemous words which they have devised are out of harmony with the Divine oracles." Once again, we see the combination of orthodoxy with regard to the Son, and an Arianism of the Spirit, which is patently of a positive and not a sceptical character. Shapland maintains in his note that Athanasius's use of *τάξις* with

(241) ἐν... μετὰ τῆς κτίσεως

(242) τοῖς κτίσματι συναριθμοῦσιν

(243) πρὸς τὸν υἱόν

(244) ἐκ τῆς λαθεῖας τῶν τροπικῶν ἀποφύγετε



reference to the relationship between the Persons of the Trinity refers to their co-essentiality rather than to any mutual gradation among them, especially as the word *πρῶτος* is used with it. Compare C. Ar. III: 9: 340C, where both the Son and the Father are called First, *πρῶτος*, the virtual superlative, without any degrees of comparison arising. All the same, there is a much stronger case than Shapland allows for interpreting this passage as indicating a linear gradation from Father, through Son, to the Spirit. The great difficulty with the Letters to Serapion, here as elsewhere, is that it is impossible to decide on this point.

In Ch. 29: 596D, with reference to the fact that the Tropici must have an adulterated Trinity and therefore an adulterated baptism: ". . . the rite of initiation which you perform is not entirely into the Godhead. For with the Godhead there is mixed a creature; and like the Arians and the heathen, you too confess to be divine (*θεολογεῖτε*) the creation, together with God Who made it through His Own Logos. If this is your attitude, what hope have you? . . . . How rash and careless on your part to reduce the Father and His Logos to the level of creatures, and yet to set the creatures on a level with God! For that is what you do when you imagine that the Spirit is a creature and rank Him with the Triad. What madness too on your part to impute injustice to God, in that only one from among them, rather than all angels and all creatures, is reckoned with God and His Logos! . . . . Such are your rites and those of the Arians. . . . " Again, Ch. 30: 600A: ". . . . This is the indivisible unity of the Triad . . . . But if, according to the new discovery that you Tropici have made<sup>(245)</sup> it is not thus - if you have rather dreamed of calling the Holy Spirit a creature - then you no longer have one faith and one baptism . . . . " Of course in one sense the statement that the Arians and the Tropici virtually divinise the creation in an illegitimate way cannot be taken quite seriously.

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(245) *κατὰ τὴν διὰ τῶν τροπικῶν ἐπεξεργασίαν.*

Athanasius knows quite well that both heresies depended on a strict and severe doctrine of creaturehood. What Athanasius is really saying is that the Tropici will be unable to avoid treating the rest of creation as being on the same plane as the persons of the Trinity; this is worked out exhaustively for Arianism in the Contra Arianos. Likewise, if the Doctrine of the Trinity is to have any meaning at all, the rest of creation will be treated as being on the same plane as the Father Himself. Athanasius specifically proves that a created Logos or Spirit cannot have the cosmic dominion that the heretics still claim, and that the final result of such heresies will be that they will pull themselves apart, and give a general licence for what amounts to a return to ancient polytheism, if, that is, there is to be any conception left of one thing being greater than another. With reference once again to Marxism, its adherents, once they tried to put it into practice, have found the "cult (in the most literal sense!) of personality" an endemic nuisance. In more general terms, if the truly Divine Logos and Spirit are relegated to the rank of creatures in the most uncompromising way, then, if anything at all is to have any pre-eminence of the type which is necessary in any unitary outlook, this entity could be literally anything at all. In the specific case of Marxism, where we can see the results of this directly, the bigoted rejection of Deity ultimately leaves no defence against Stalinism in its crudest form, unless one takes the step of denying the monism that is an essential thing about Communism, so that one thing is quite literally as good as another.

Ch. 32: 605A: "But the irrational and fabulous invention<sup>(246)</sup> of the Tropici is out of harmony with Scriptures, and harmonises, on

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(246) ἡ ἀλόγιστος μυθοπλαστία



the other hand, with the irrationality of the Ariomaniacs.. It is natural for them to pretend in this way, to deceive the simple. But . . . . they have not succeeded in covering themselves by their protestations of disagreement with the Arians. They have indeed incurred the latter party's hatred, because they only call the Spirit a creature and not the Logos as well; and by all men they have been condemned, because they are in truth fighting against the Spirit ( $\piνευματομαχόντες$ ), and are not far from dead . . . .", This confirms the conclusions already reached. This is the first appearance of  $\piνευματομαχεῖν$ , the verb corresponding to the noun  $\piνευματομάχοι$ , which is never used by Athanasius. It is used by Didymus and Basil, beginning about 368-370, especially with an Egyptian context.

We shall jump ahead to Ep. IV: 5: 644D, since the intervening passage in Ep. III is so important that it is best left to the end.

"After this, will anyone dare to say, when he hears the words Son and Spirit, 'Is the Father then a grandfather?' Or, 'Is the Spirit a son?' Yes, they will dare, the Eunomii and the Eudoxii and the Eusebii! When once they affect the Arian heresy, they will not keep their tongues from impiety." Eunomius was the principal leader of the second generation Arians, about the time of Athanasius's third exile. He formulated an Arian theology around the specific use of the term  $\hbar\nu\mu\omicron\iota\omicron\varsigma$  as a description of the Second Person in relation to the First. He also was the first Arian to extend this theology specifically to the Spirit, saying that It was not God, and merely a creature below the rank of the alleged creature-Son.<sup>(247)</sup> Eudoxius and Acacius, the successor of Eusebius of Caesarea, were the leaders of the extreme Homoean party which allied itself with the Anomoeans at Seleucia and thus ensured their victory. Epiphanius, Haer. LXXIII or LIII: 1, makes, but does not support, the assertion that they definitely denied the Deity of the Spirit; otherwise, there is no real evidence. Eusebius - ? Of Caesarea, perhaps, as the

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(247) See Epiphanius, Haereses 76.

predecessor of Acacius, and as a definite exponent of the Origenist doctrine of the Spirit. But we have already given arguments for the conclusion that Athanasius would have been far more indulgent to even the Pneumatology of Origen, and he had already shown (De Decretis 3) that he was not prepared to throw the responsibility for Acacius on to his predecessor. Besides, as with Arianism, Eusebius of Caesarea does not respond to the decisive test (from the point of view of a negative response), as regards the Pneumatic heresy that we meet in these Epistles; that is, in his exegesis of Amos 4:13 LXX.<sup>(248)</sup> He takes the πνεῦμα in the κτίσων πνεῦμα to be the Holy Spirit, but explains κτίσων as καταπέμπων or κατατάσσων. Thus, it is most likely that the person referred to is the old enemy, Eusebius of Nicomedia, and if this is so this passage is a striking commentary on the close relationship, for Athanasius, between Tropicism and Arian extremism.

To conclude, we must now quote the beginning of Ep. III, Ch. 1. Athanasius has promised Serapion an abridgment of Ep. I, but Ep. II after the merest introduction, has been entirely a summary of the anti-Arian writings of Athanasius, and it is only in this still later Epistle that he makes any reference to Tropicism per se at all. "Perhaps you will wonder why, when I was charged to abridge and briefly explain the letter that I had written concerning the Holy Spirit, you find me . . . writing against those who are guilty of impiety towards the Son of God and who call Him a creature. But you will not blame me . . . when you know the cause. Indeed, when your Piety sees how reasonable it is, he will welcome it. Our Lord Himself said that the Paraclete 'shall not speak from Himself, but whatsoever things He shall hear, these shall He speak . . . for He shall take of Mine and shall declare it unto you.' and 'having breathed on them' He gave the Spirit to the disciples from (ἐξ) Himself, and in this way the Father

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(248) Eccl. Theol. III: 2.



poured Him out "upon all flesh," as it is written. It is for that reason fitting that I should have spoken and written first about the Son, that from the knowledge concerning the Son<sup>(249)</sup> we may be able to have properly the knowledge concerning the Spirit. For we shall find that the Spirit has the same propriety in relation to the Son<sup>(250)</sup> as the Son has in relation to the Father." The problems and ambiguities in connection with the Ad Serapionem are at their maximum in this extract, so that we need not make any special comment.

We can already see certain conclusions, which look simple on the surface, but become more and more complicated and paradoxical the more carefully the matter is examined. The Tropici were a group of heretics who repudiated Arianism angrily and with great emphasis, but had a doctrine of the Spirit that Athanasius, with still greater emphasis and anger, denounces as virtually a repetition of Arianism, and which, notwithstanding their admitted formal repudiation of this greater heresy, will, according to Athanasius, inevitably lead them back to it. Incidentally, the word *τροπικός* is, almost certainly, one of the most opprobrious epithets which can be applied to a holder of this Pneumatology, since it refers back to one of the most odious aspects of the Arian doctrine of the Son.

There are several possible explanations of this, and several that are excluded. It might be said, in the first place, that the Epistles are not authentic, or were not written at the time that is categorically indicated by the internal evidence - the Third Exile of Athanasius.<sup>(251)</sup> There is no good reason to doubt either that they are authentic or that they were in fact written between 357 and 362. Or

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(249) ἐκ τῆς περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ γνώσεως.

(250) ἰδιότητα πρὸς τὸν υἱόν.

(251) Epistle I: 1.

Or we might decide that Athanasius was afflicted with a severe form of the rabies theologorum, and, as would be quite likely in a somewhat fatigued man in his senescence, was now in the state where he saw an Arian under every bed. This does not accord with what we know of the Athanasius of the recently written *Contra Arianos*, or, say, the *De Synodis*, almost contemporary with the *Epistles*, or with any of the authentic works written during or after 362. In all these, his discrimination between one heresy and another is, and remains, abnormally acute for his time. He would almost certainly never have reacted in the way in which he did, and with the vehemence which he showed, if the *Tropici* had not been almost pointedly reminiscent of the Arians. On the other hand, there is a serious objection to the idea that they were really seriously influenced by Eunomius and his like; if they had been, they would really have been Arian sympathisers, which they ostentatiously rejected. Also, and this is at least as significant, they would have had a much wider geographical distribution, being presumably coterminous with the contemporary Anomoean school. It is most important to remember that any influence of Eunomius would be direct rather than indirect, since the *Epistles* were written at the peak of his influence. The most tempting hypothesis is that the *Tropici* represented a simple reversion to Origen. Admittedly, Origen subordinated the Spirit much more than he subordinated the Son, and for that reason, this hypothesis is much stronger in the case of the *Tropici* than in the case of Arianism. However, on balance it is better rejected, in the first place because of the marked difference, as noted above, between Tropicism and Macedonianism, which latter was patently a return to Origenism. In the second place, there is no equivalent in the *Epistles* to the *De Sententia Dionysii*, not even one word. There is no record that the



Tropici made a point of quoting Dionysius of Alexandria in support of their case, as the Egyptian Arians did, or Origen or any other member of that tradition, and Athanasius never had to defend their orthodoxy on that point. We have already indicated that Origen, however suspect he might have been, was not beyond defence by an expert apologist, and the author of the *De Sententia Dionysii* would have been more than equal to the necessities of the case.

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of the case to account for is the fact that, in spite of the passages which indicate that Arius and his followers in a routine and off-handed way degraded the Spirit to the rank of creature, the first or almost the first really serious heretics in the matter of the Deity of the Spirit were people who had repudiated the Arians in the ordinary way. This casts doubt on the tempting hypothesis that Tropicism was simply an extension of Arianism down one rung of the Trinitarian ladder. On the other hand, this would be quite a good way, if rather too extreme, to describe such representatives of the Origenist tradition as the Macedonians, insofar as they can be held to be tainted with the extreme forms of heresy. The relationship is much more complex than that; it was not simply the natural result of the Spirit being in the third place in the Trinitarian order. Also, Tropicism is correspondingly the final evidence against the opposite theory of the nature and genesis of Arianism, the Humanitarian Christology; Christ as another man on whom the Spirit of God came. This would be a natural development of the heretical Antiochene theology of Paul of Samosata. It is true that the Arians actually did put forward this argument, quoting the Baptism of Christ in Jordan, Psalm 45 (AV): 7 & 8 and other allied verses; Athanasius answers these arguments in C. Ar. I: 46-52. But once again it is most likely that our judgment of Arian exegesis as a whole applies here too; that is, to put it bluntly,

the Arian texts were pretexts. If it had been otherwise, and if this principle had seriously been the root of Arianism, the refutation of Arianism would have made Tropicism impossible, because in that case the Spirit would have to be automatically accepted as God once Christ was. And this is impossible in view of the overwhelming conviction of Athanasius that Tropicism was in some sense a repetition of Arianism.

Finally, we shall have to be able to take into account the uncertainties and ambiguities of Athanasius's response to the situation. It is held, e.g. by Shapland, that his doctrine of the Spirit was derived from his doctrine of the Son in such a way as to make him a virtual adherent to the later doctrine of the Filioque.<sup>(252)</sup> This is an obvious interpretation of some of the passages which we have just cited. But it has the fatal objection that, as we shall show, Athanasius was actually excessively non-committal on this matter, and where he did commit himself he followed the later Greek Procession rather than the Filioque. This indicates that for Athanasius the doctrine of the Spirit was an analogous repetition of that of the Son rather than anything else. This would explain why Athanasius is content to make the Spirit proceed from the Father alone, as the Son-Logos has His sole origin in the Father. It is true that Athanasius often speaks in such a way that the Filioque appears to us to be an absolutely necessary corollary. For example, there is the closest possible association between the identity of nature of Father and Son and the filial generation of the Son from the Father; we shall show that the Homousion essentially expresses this linkage. But this proves all the more abundantly our doubts about the Filioque. It shows all the more that,

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(252) Op. cit. 34-43, esp. 41-43.



in face of this very strong motive for it, the motives against must have been all the stronger, and confirms our suggestion that, for Athanasius, the actual relation between Spirit and Son was not procession but analogy, or rather the Homousion interpreted in the most purely quasi-qualitative way. But there is still a sense in which, for Athanasius, the relation is one of procession, a subordinate sense, perhaps, and one not quite integrated with the rest of his theology. These issues are very complex and difficult and will be discussed more fully later. But they do suggest that Tropicism presented itself primarily as an analogous repetition of Arianism, together with some element in it that caused Athanasius to retain traces of what later became the Latin Procession. (253)

To sum up, it appears that Tropicism was an essentially Egyptian movement, (254) and this suggests the paradoxical hypothesis that a movement of this character was in some way connected with the work of Athanasius himself, not primarily for the reason proposed by Shapland, that Athanasius had destroyed the conservative theology, but in that it actually depended on the work of the great Patriarch. An analysis of the situation shows that this paradoxical situation is in fact the truth, and is the only way to account for all the evidence. To understand the position, we must go back to the pre-Nicene theology of the Spirit. At that time, there had been a long period when the Holy Spirit had been virtually neglected except for the most formal type of affirmation of the baptismal creed; the functions of the Spirit were taken over by the Logos, conceived in the most rationalistic way, with the Logos being the Person of the Trinity in the direct contact,

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(253) As we shall show in our treatment of the Letters, *passim*.

(254) As Shapland says *op. cit.* 32.

par excellence, with creation and the individual creatures, especially humanity and human beings. Correspondingly, there was an almost complete lack of attention to the Holy Spirit, which is perhaps nowhere more strikingly shown in the earlier writings of Athanasius, and in the first generation of Arians. The former can get through the whole of the *De Incarnatione* without one reference, and the references in Arius, where they were meant seriously (and were not Scriptural "pretexts", as was the case with the Baptism in Jordon, etc.), were of an offhand and routine character. It is only at a relatively advanced stage of the Arian controversy that Athanasius begins to refer to the Spirit in a manner that would be demanded by His place in the Trinity. Now, it will be shown later that, firstly, there is a complete positive correlation between the increasing tendency to refer naturally to the Spirit and the success with which Athanasius bases his theology on the strict connection between the Logos-Son and the Father, repudiating and abandoning the former *de facto* association between Logos and Cosmos; secondly, that all the earliest references to the Spirit concern the participation by mankind in particular (and also creation generally) in the Divine grace which comes from and through the Father and Son. Thus the Spirit increasingly came to have the same relation to the Father-and-Son, considered together, as the Logos formerly had to the Father. This was reinforced by another tendency which is not quite so clear as the one that we have just described, but which can be recognised with assurance. Athanasius's tremendous work, in *C. Ar.* I: 37 - III: 58, in refuting Arian exegesis and in expounding the "creaturely language" about Christ in the correct and orthodox sense, resulted in, for almost the first time, a completely systematic doctrine of the Humanity of Christ, as distinct from His Deity (or third state.



The Arian doctrine of the nature of Christ must not be held to refer to His humanity.). Now, when we examine these sections of the Contra Arianos and compare them with the De Incarnatione, we find a far greater emphasis on the active as distinct from the passive humanity. Although these concepts are still used, the humanity of Christ is much less a "passion" to be endured and abolished so that we can be "deified", and much more a new active life that we are to share now that it has been established in the humanity of Christ. Following on from this, we can see the beginnings of the idea that our sanctification consists in participation in the Humanity of Christ as much as in the Deity, and that, as a corollary, the Person of the Trinity Who mediates this participation to us must be the Spirit. But, it was this very sort of relationship between the Divine Logos and the world that was the villain of the piece as far as Arianism was concerned, that is, in the inadequate and confused form of the third and second centuries, and as long as the question had not been rigorously clarified with reference to the Spirit, it was quite inevitable that somebody would sometime apply Arian principles in this field too. Unfortunately, this was not yet the case in the earliest stages of the revival of Pneumatology. We can still find the earlier uncertainties and confusions of the former Logos doctrine in Athanasius's doctrine of the Spirit at the stage of the Contra Arianos; it needed the appearance of the Tropici to warn him to get on to the right track without delay.

The Tropici were, in a perverted sense, genuine Athanasians; in fact, in the context in which they found themselves, they could not have gone on to the Spirit and given their full attention to that Person unless they had first fully accepted the Athanasian doctrine of the Son. But the way was still open for them to use Arian ways of

thought on the subject of the Spirit. The hypothesis that is being defended here is that this is what happened, and the author submits that it is the only one, and is the only one together with his hypothesis on Arianism, that really explains the character of the Tropicist theology or the reactions of Athanasius to the new situation. (255)

The Tropici said that the Spirit was a creature, not primarily because the Spirit was third in traditional rank or because of Origenistic Scriptural and intellectual doubts (although they brought these forward as excuses), but because, in the situation that had been brought about by the work of Athanasius himself, the Spirit was in the place formerly occupied by the Logos. This is evidently the reason why Athanasius felt Tropicism so strongly to be virtually a repetition of Arianism. It must never be forgotten that it would not have been at all difficult for the Tropici to take this step, in spite of the earlier work of Athanasius. One of the main roots of Arianism, the ruthless sense of the exclusive and exhaustive distinction between what can be God and what is really creaturely reality, and of the humble state of the latter, and an equally ruthless criticism of anything savouring in the slightest of a confusion between deity and creaturehood, was, in spite of certain survivals from the older terminology, accepted wholeheartedly by Athanasius, and more than accepted. On the other hand, Athanasius's proof that Arianism did not follow, so far applied, in the main, only to the Second Person. And all the elements of the Tropicist theology correspond to uncertainties in Athanasius's earlier doctrine. Even in the case of the Tropicist use of the apparently Origenist argument that on the orthodox theology the Spirit would have

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(255) This conclusion is actually a further progress in the direction taken by Shapland.



to be either the Logos's brother or the Father's grandson, the same applies. The form of the argument indicates that the corresponding orthodox theology had gone a long way towards making the Son title normative for the Second Person, but had not yet really distinguished procession from filial generation, while its ribald tone points to its Arian pedigree. The former is the stage which Athanasius had reached at the end of his anti-Arian writings. The Tropici were prepared, at a pinch, to accept the relation between the Father and Son, and of course they accepted that of Creator and creature, but they were determined not to accept a single type of relation beyond these, and, having to choose between the one or the other to explain the as yet uncertain relation of the Spirit, they chose the creaturely relation with alacrity.

This theory accounts for what Athanasius clarified in the Epistles; that is, the fact that he repeated, *mutatis mutandis*, the arguments already used against the Arians, this time to prove the Deity of the Spirit, and also that he began to make a real distinction between filiation and procession. But it also accounts for these respects in which Athanasius was still uncertain, if not actually mistaken. The strong soteriological emphasis of Athanasius, as well as the importance which he attached to the humanity of Christ, as we have already discussed, worked together to direct attention to the relation between the Spirit and the Son, and between the Doctrine of the Spirit and the Doctrine of the Son. Also, although the Athanasian doctrine of the Homousion had largely lost its original constitutive or quasi-genetical element,<sup>(256)</sup> there was still the tradition that absolute likeness among the Persons was intimately connected with the origin of the Son and Spirit; thus, the absolute identity of the work of the Son and Spirit should have led to the Filioque. But this was masked by the fact that the Spirit, for

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(256) See below, pp. 1214-18 and 1253-55.

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(256) See below, pp. 1214-18 and 1253-55.



reasons which we have indicated, presented itself in the Tropicist context as an analogous repetition of the Second Person, and especially as a repetition of the Logos in the form in which it was conceived in pre-Arian days, and early in the Arian controversy, which was after all the theology which Athanasius would have learnt in his early youth. Such a Spirit would be naturally held to proceed from the Father alone. This consideration would make it easy for Athanasius to stress the absolute likeness of the Spirit to the other Persons, and especially to the Son, without implying the Filioque. When he says, in Ep. III:1, that we should take our doctrine of the Spirit from that of the Son, he is simply asking the reader to proceed from the known case to an unknown but analogous case. This would not necessarily be a diriment impediment to the Filioque, but it would neutralise the tendencies towards this doctrine, and correspondingly give free play to other forces which impelled him to what amounted to the Greek doctrine.

In conclusion, three important points may be raised, in increasing order <sup>of significance</sup>. Firstly, one of the clearest differences between Arianism and Tropicism, as we can see each from their refutation by Athanasius, is the relatively undeveloped character of the latter. This is a safe conclusion, even if allowance has to be made for the less favourable conditions under which the Epistles to Serapion were written, during the Third Exile in the Egyptian desert, compared with the more leisurely atmosphere at the time of writing of the Orations against the Arians, if our chronology is correct, which would have allowed a more extended treatment of Arianism, in contrast to the hurry which is evident by comparison throughout the Epistles. The reason for this is obvious; the gross neglect of the Doctrine of the Spirit which was increasingly characteristic of theology in previous centuries, which actually reached its nadir in the ante-Nicene works of Athanasius

himself. As we shall show, Athanasius's theology of the Spirit only developed slowly and incidentally before the storm of Tropicism burst on him, and, of the other theologians of the fourth century, only Cyril of Jerusalem gave anything like a full treatment of the Spirit, in his Catechetical Lectures, before this time. In his case, it is fair comment that, since the Catechetical Lectures were lectures on the Creed of his church, the inclusion of the Spirit was actually forced by the form of the creed, and in fact by the unanimous credal tradition of Christianity. Perhaps in a way it was unfortunate for the Church that Athanasius aborted the heresy too soon, while he was still fresh theologically from his triumph over Arianism; a fully developed Tropicist heresy, or, what is more to the point, its full refutation, would have been most interesting.

It is even more important to notice the implications of the fact that the first stage in the serious development of the theology of the Spirit was, in fact, this heresy! Let us consider the circumstances. The Tropicist heresy arose exactly at the great watershed of contemporary theological history. It is true that in general the dividing line can be placed at about 361-362, but it arose in Egypt, the land which nurtured both Arius and Athanasius, and which would certainly have been in advance of the rest of the world at all stages. At this time, the work of Athanasius and orthodoxy generally, against the Arians was almost finished. Henceforth the theology of the Second Person was to be Christological in the more familiar sense, in that it concerned the relation between the Deity and the Humanity of Christ, the Apollinarian, Eutychian, and Nestorian heresies, the polarisation of theology between Alexandria and Antioch, and the orthodoxy of Chalcedon. All this theology, whether orthodox or heretical, rests on the shoulders of Athanasius, and it was his work in the "Contra Arianos"



that made it possible. The important field of Trinitarian theology proper was now the Spirit. What is even more important, Athanasius had completely destroyed the old correlation between the Logos and the cosmos, and had firmly established that the Logos can only be understood as completely within the Trinity. Thus the Person of the Trinity that was in direct contact with creatures in general and men in particular became the Spirit. If there was any tendency to correlate any Person with creaturely existence in the manner that formerly applied to the Logos, the Person would have been the Spirit. If our hypothesis of the nature of Arianism is correct, it virtually means that Arianism is a Jacob's Ladder heresy; that is, there is one Person that is held to be in particular and direct contact with creaturely life, and humanity especially; previous theology was not careful enough to maintain the full Deity of that Person, but tended to understand Him correlatively in terms of the creaturely; the nemesis of this is that the heretics concluded and proclaimed that that Person was a creature. With the predecessors of Arianism and the Arians themselves, the Person was the Second, as Logos. In the changed conditions after the middle of the fourth century, it would be natural to expect a corresponding heresy of the Third Person, with both the First and Second Persons in a state of virtual otiose isolation, and the Third Person, as the most significant Person of the Trinity and the centre of interest, and the Person in direct contact with man, a creature. The fact that a heresy apparently of this nature, occurred, and occurred immediately, is final confirmation that the impulse behind Arianism was very powerful and pervasive, and had the character that we have postulated.

The final point has been left to this stage, because it turns out to be the climax of the whole chapter, and the justification for

treating so fully of the relation between Arianism and Marxism in a thesis on the Trinitarian theology of Athanasius. We have already noted that, in comparison with Arianism, Tropicism, the Arianism of the Spirit appears undeveloped. Now, what would a fully developed Tropicism or Arianism of the Spirit be like? It is not quite correct to say that the relation between the Doctrine of the Son and the Doctrine of the Spirit is that between objective and subjective revelation. Both are truly objective. The objective initiation of the work of Christ in the miracle of Christmas has its precise objective counterpart in Pentecost and also in Ascension, as a reading of that much neglected chapter, Acts I, as well as Acts 2, will make clear. The true relationship is that between God's enabling work of reconciliation in one individual, and the spread of that work to include all humanity and all human life. This is achieved in the life of the Church and its work of witness. The only sense in which the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit is subjective is that, in the slang phrase, "this is where we come in"; we now have the bounden duty, or rather enjoy the glorious privilege, of sharing in God's own work of reconciliation, through the Spirit. Therefore, a fully developed Arianism of the Spirit would concern itself with such things as the work and witness of the Church (and the individual Christian), the spread of the Gospel, the growth of Christian humanity into the stature of Christ, the interaction of all this with the outer world, the teleological direction of history. And the guiding and motivating force behind all this would be a creature and *πνεῦμα* at that! This heresy that we have postulated would be quite literally Marxism itself, in the sense that even Arianism was not, since it would be almost impossibly difficult to maintain any real interest in an



otiose Father and Son under these circumstances. We have already noted that one of the main differences between the Arian and Marxist doctrines is that the former is individual, concerning the individual Second Person and the individual Christ, whereas Marxism concerns itself with humanity in general. It now appears that the correct way to describe this difference is that Marxism is related to Arianism as the Third Person (ontologically and especially economically) is related to the Second. Perhaps this is an additional hidden reason for such things as the Marxists' coyness about giving a definite name to the One Reality or One Society about which they have so much to say, for it is the characteristic of the Third Person, as distinct from the Second, that He does not show His own Person or Hypostasis, but works in and through the persons of other men, and even institutions and forces.

We can now see the final theological reason for the differences between Arianism and Marxism in these terms. It is simply a canard to say that the Church has not developed the Doctrine of the Spirit. True, there is something missing yet, but in another sense, there is a great deal about the Spirit in the history of theology. The much neglected and underrated Filioque question is the most important case in point. Of even more direct relevance here is the work of Joachim of Flora (1130-1202), whose doctrine of the Three Kingdoms, in temporal succession the Kingdom of the Father, the Kingdom of the Son, and the Kingdom of the Spirit, is historically of great significance. However false and heretical it might be, it is at least a revival of the Biblical doctrine of the Spirit in the proper context, that of progress, history, and teleological direction. This doctrine led an existence underground in the Fraticelli and other similar movements,

occasionally surfacing in times of great stress, as in the 16th and 17th centuries, until it finally became the most important constitutive factor in the religious philosophy of Hegel and his successors, as is shown by the presence in Hegel of three basic characteristics which can be traced to Joachim, historicism, the triadic rhythm, and the supremacy of the Spirit as shown by the ascription of that title to the highest ranking concept, Absolute Reality, in his system. And the influence of this Hegelian philosophy on Marx needs no further amplification.

Thus, even though the author has found Marxism and classical Arianism mutually most illuminating, it is impossible to give a full theological answer to Arianism<sup>modern analogue, Marxism,</sup> except in terms of the Doctrine of the Spirit. What is necessary is to study Athanasius's treatment of the Arian heresy, and go on from there to see what would be the analogous answer to an equally developed heresy of the Spirit, as we have described it. For that reason, we shall be particularly careful to note any hints that may be present in Athanasius's own writings. It is in this spirit that we now turn to the writings of Athanasius in which he refutes in the name of his Lord these two great heresies, in the hope that they may supply material for one of the great unfinished tasks of the Church to-day.